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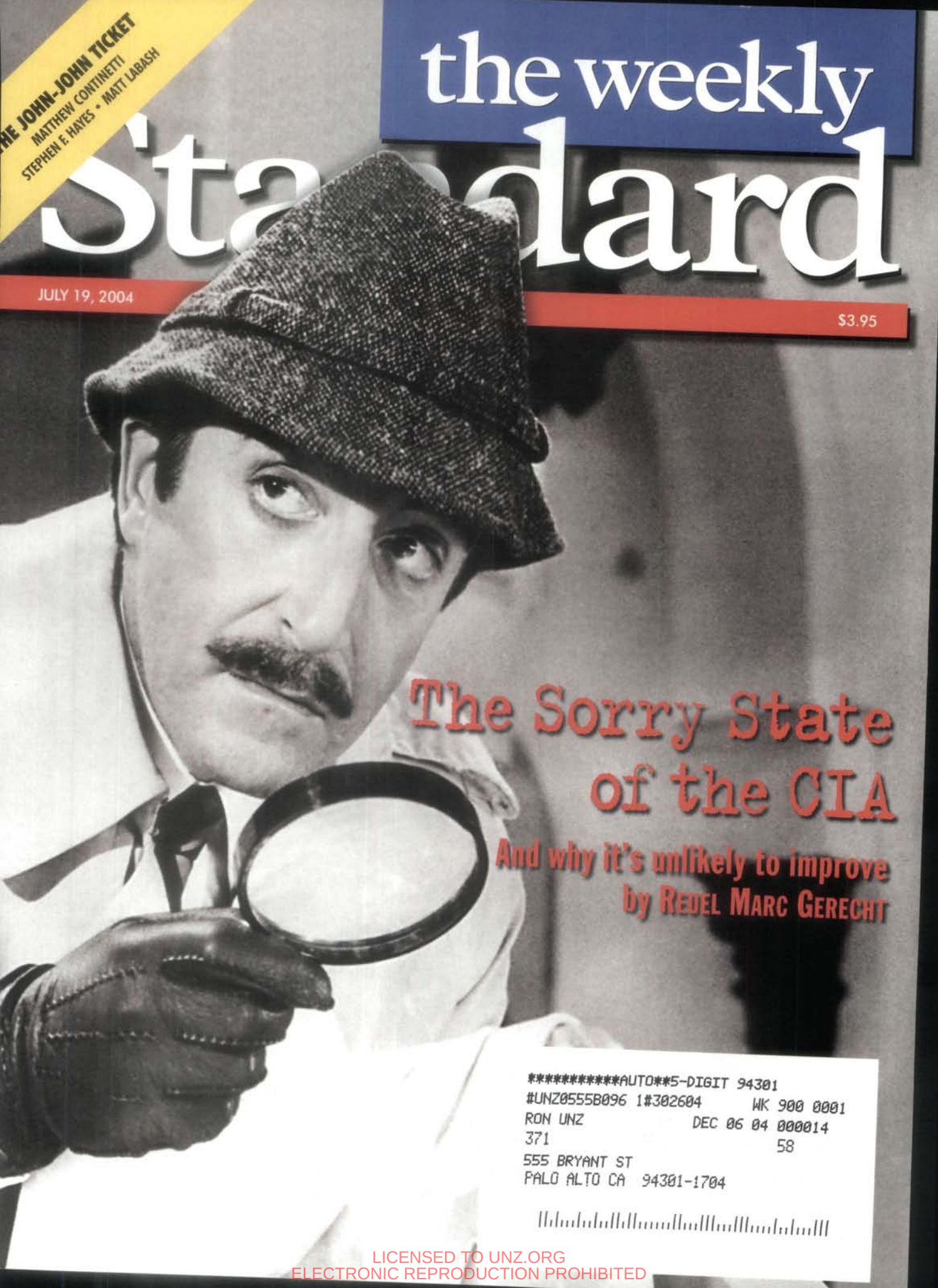

The Sorry State of the CIA

And why it's unlikely to improve

by Reuel Marc Gerecht

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Talkin' 'Bout M-m-m-Mike's Obfuscation

It makes perfect sense that "documentary" filmmaker Michael Moore would have grown up a fan of The Who during its late-1960s/early-1970s heyday, that British mod-rock band having held a famously particular appeal to ultra-geeky adolescent males. So it makes sense, too, that the 50-year-old though still-ultra-geeky and adolescent Moore would originally have included a Who song—1971's "Won't Get Fooled Again"—on the soundtrack to *Fahrenheit 9/11*, his smash-hit anti-Bush propaganda cartoon. Interestingly, however, "Won't Get Fooled Again" is missing from the commercially distributed, final edit of Moore's movie. How come?

Moore's version of the story appears in his interview with *Film Comment*, relevant excerpts of which are posted on the Film Society of Lincoln Center's website. There's a moment in *Fahrenheit 9/11* that all but "demands" the audience should be treated to The Who tune in question, Moore reports. But bandleader Pete Townshend simply "would not allow the song to be used." According to Moore (who characteristically refers to himself in the third person):

> Word came to us that [Townshend] is not a fan of Michael Moore's and in fact supports the war and supports Tony Blair and doesn't want the song used in any way that would make Blair look bad. Harvey [Weinstein] personally made an appeal to him to reconsider. And he wouldn't.... So, I remembered while I was driving in Michigan "Rockin' in the Free World" came on the radio and I thought this would be a cool song to have in the movie. So we said, "Let's see how this works," and it worked perfectly. Called up Neil Young and he said, "Whatever you need. Absolutely. It's yours." Once we started playing it in the movie, we quickly forgot about The Who. In fact, after Cannes, we got a call from their manager who said they might be willing to reconsider. And I said, "No, uh uh."

To review, then: Pete Townshend is (1) a right-wing warhawk uncomfortable with the idea that his music might be used against the interests of Blair, Bush & Co.; (2) a craven person, willing to abandon his political views when it appears there might be valuable publicity to be got in the bargain; and (3) a craven and *disappointed* person at that, Moore having rebuffed Townshend's pathetic, post-Cannes attempt to crawl back into his good graces.

Either that—or Michael Moore, as has been widely rumored, is a liar. Which is an impression Pete Townshend has now gone far to confirm in a July 7 posting on his own website. "Michael Moore has been making some claims—mentioning me by name—which I believe distort the truth," The Who's guitarist begins. For instance:

> When first approached I knew nothing about the content of his film *Fahrenheit 9/11*. My publisher informed me they had already refused the use of my song in principle because Miramax, the producers, offered well below what the song normally commands for use in a movie. They asked me if I wanted to ask for more money, I told them no. Nevertheless... [Harvey Weinstein] interceded personally, explained in more detail to [my manager] Bill what the movie was about, and offered to raise the bid very substantially indeed....
>
> At this point I emailed Bill... that I had not really been convinced by *Bowling for Columbine*, and had been worried about its accuracy; it felt to me like a bullying film. Out of courtesy to Harvey I suggested that if he and Moore were determined to have me reconsider, I should at least get a chance to see a copy of the new film.... I never received a copy of the film to view. At no time did I ask Moore or Miramax to reconsider anything....
>
> I suggested in the email that they might use something by Neil Young. ... Moore himself takes credit for this idea, and I have no idea whether my suggestion reached him....
>
> I have nothing against Michael Moore personally... but I greatly resent being bullied and slurred by him in interviews just because he didn't get what he wanted from me.

Bravo, Pete! Ultra-geeky fan base notwithstanding, it turns out the kid's all right. ♦

And Eating It, Too

Late last week the Senate Intelligence Committee issued a report blasting George Tenet's CIA for its prewar judgments about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. The bottom line was unsurprising: Our spywork about Iraqi WMD stunk; the CIA's analyses were flawed; oversight of both processes was inadequate. But contrary to conventional wisdom, blame for these mistakes, the Senate report contended, lies squarely with the folks at Langley—not at the White House. And, no, there really *isn't* any evidence that the Agency was pressured into altering its views about Iraq and WMD by Bush-appointed neocon zealots.

So now that this take on things—formerly a favorite theme of Bush-o-phobic Democrats in Congress—has been exploded by an independent, bipartisan review panel, who among the foamy-mouthed set will be first to acknowledge the baselessness of his past accusations?

Not Sen. Richard Durbin of Illi-

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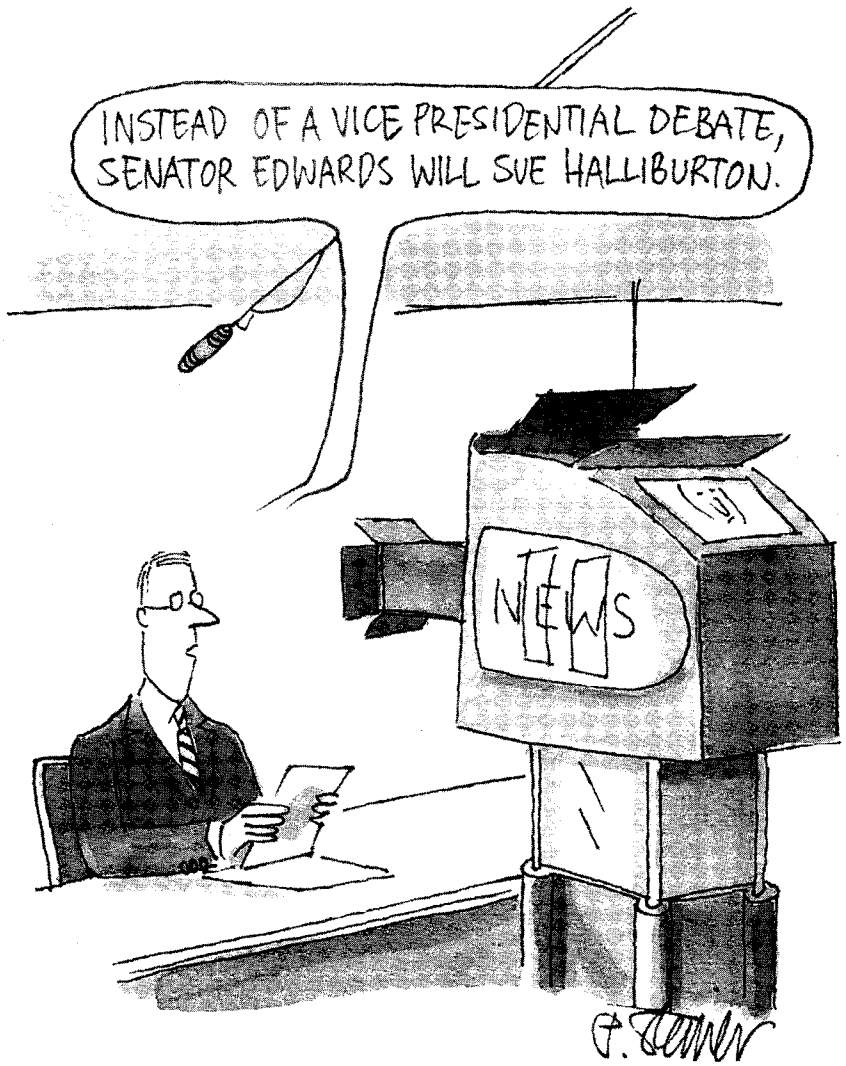

nois, that's for damn sure. The same day the Intelligence Committee report was released, Durbin, a member of that panel, penned a *Washington Post* op-ed suggesting that senior Bush administration officials, though innocent of political interference with the CIA analysts, nevertheless should be held responsible for those analysts' botched assessments precisely because they *didn't* interfere. "They should have been more diligent in challenging the validity of analytical assumptions and the adequacy of intelligence collection and reporting," claimed Durbin, to whom shame is apparently an alien concept. ♦

A Gorgeous Mosaic

From the July 8 *San Jose Mercury News*, dateline Sacramento:

"A lawmaker who had called for Education Secretary Richard Riordan to resign for joking with a 6-year-old that her name meant 'stupid, dirty girl' abruptly backed off Thursday after mistakenly suggesting that race was a factor in the quip.

"Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally, D-Compton, canceled a news conference . . . after learning that the girl subjected to Riordan's joke was white, not black. . . .

"A summer book club event Riordan attended at the Santa Barbara Public Library last week triggered the furor. Riordan, a wealthy former Los Angeles mayor known for both his philanthropy and his verbal blunders, stepped into a political morass when he joked that Goleta resident Isis D'Luciano's first name meant 'stupid, dirty girl.' Isis had asked Riordan if he knew that she was named for an Egyptian goddess. Apparently confused, Riordan thought he was being asked what her name meant—and guessed awkwardly.

"He later apologized for the joke, saying he was teasing the girl. . . . Dymally told the *Mercury News* then that Riordan 'needs to do more than just apologize. And I have to inject: This was a little African-American girl. Would he have done that to a white girl?' Dymally did not return calls for comment Thursday. . . .

"Isis's mother, Trinity Lila, was baffled by Riordan's statement and Dymally's actions. 'If he feels that the man should step down, does it matter that she's white?' asked Lila. . . .

"Isis was apparently so unfazed by Riordan's comment that she didn't mention it to her mom until the library director brought up the exchange. 'She was really OK,' Lila said. 'I asked her why she kept repeating what her name meant and why she didn't tell him that what he said wasn't very nice. She said she didn't want to hurt his feelings. I think she thought he wasn't very bright.'" ♦

W. 43rd St. Style Report

"He looks like he is about 18. I'm going to card his ass tomorrow."

—Whoopi Goldberg quoted on John Edwards, *New York Post*, July 9

"'He looks like he's about 18,' she said later, joking that she would check his identification before serving him a drink."

—Same actress, same quote, same day's *New York Times*

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Casual

"Won't You Join Me?"

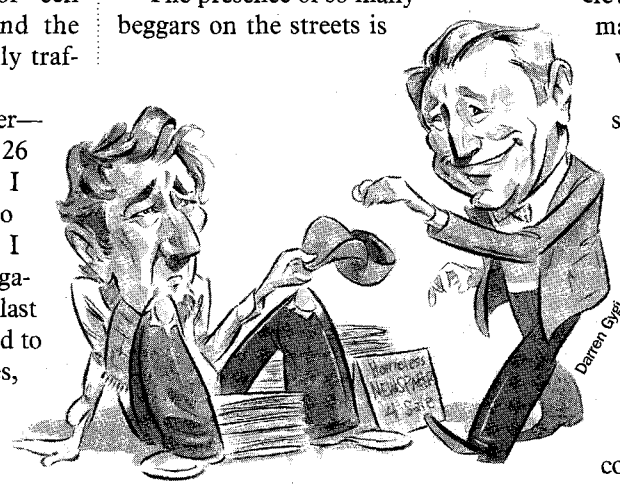
As I stepped out into the street after a performance of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra the other evening, it occurred to me that there have been three distinct changes in the urban landscape over the past quarter century: the end of indoor smoking at all but a small number of public places, forcing smokers out of doors; the pervasiveness of cell phones, indoors and out; and the presence of begging on heavily trafficked big-city streets.

As a former semi-pro smoker—a two-pack-a-day man, now 26 years off the weed—I find I don't miss the smell of tobacco in the atmosphere, though I don't like the hounding of cigarette smokers, who may be the last pariah group in America. I used to mock people with cell phones, thinking them jittery jerks who couldn't bear the least repose, even in their cars. But of course I have long since acquired such a gadget myself; and all I can say in my own defense is that I leave it in my car and only two people know its number.

Of these three changes in the urban landscape, the one I shall probably never get used to is the omnipresence of beggars, among whom I include those people who sell "homeless" newspapers. (The one in Chicago is called *Street Wise*.) Begging is probably the world's second oldest profession. Every civilization must have had its beggars, but it is only relatively recently in America that begging has become so evident.

When I was a kid, most begging was confined to one or the other of Chicago's two skid rows. Beggars were utterly defeated men, bedraggled, often toothless, asking for a dime or a quarter, ostensibly for a cup of coffee, more likely to be used for a shot of rotgut. Begging was rare enough for comedians to make jokes about it. Henny Youngman used to tell about the bum who asked him for fifty cents for a cup of coffee. "I said to him, 'But coffee's only a quarter.' 'Ah,' he replied, 'won't you join me?'" Such jokes are no longer told, and we certainly no longer use the word "bum."

The presence of so many beggars on the streets is a sad reminder that, even in our opulent country, lots of people can't make a go of things. In my neighborhood, some of the same beggars have been around for at least a decade. Begging has become not a fall-back but a job. Many of them are black men and women, but some are white; and quite a few of both races are fairly young. An occasional beggar will be faintly menacing, but most are not; a couple of them are even cheerful. I blame the number of beggars in America not on capitalism, but on the great human lottery, which awards less skill, little power of forming good habits, and simple bad luck to a small but, it now seems, not insignificant number of people in every society.



A man I know who sells *Street Wise* tells me that he needs $25 a day to make his nut, or expenses. These include breakfast and lunch—I believe he gets dinner at one of the local soup kitchens—and money for doing his laundry, and a few bucks for a place to sleep. *Street Wise* costs $1, and twenty-five cents of each copy sold goes back to the publisher. In his 70s, he schleps all his possessions around with him in plastic bags and sits, while selling his paper, in a beach chair.

I cough up roughly four or five bucks a week to local beggars, plus odd amounts of change to the zonked-out, half-mad people who appear from time to time along the streets I travel. I give this small sum out of a goofy array of motives, none of them very elevated. If I can help someone make his $25 nut a little quicker, why not? The fear of feeling myself closed-hearted may be a stronger motive. Lowest of all is the superstitious dread of bringing the furies down upon myself by not giving, which could shut off my own good fortune in making an easy living.

The presence of beggars is a very great drag on the spirit. Going about the business of a lucky life, I am brought up by confronting a man or woman who so obviously eats dreary food, works in miserable weather, and sleeps in conditions under which I could probably not sleep at all. Mine is a merely normal, not an overactive, conscience. But the sight of people begging gets to it.

I don't know what Sweden and Norway do with their beggars; I recall encountering beggars in Amsterdam, but nowhere so many as in big American cities, where the problem doesn't seem likely soon to go away. For the most selfish of reasons, I wish it would. Beggars are too much in my and everyone else's face, underscoring and italicizing the essential unfairness of life. In my American utopia, they wouldn't beg but carry a coffee and flick open cell phones with which to call their brokers, like, you might say, the rest of us beggars.

Joseph Epstein

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The 9/10 Democrats

Last Thursday, CNN's Larry King asked John Kerry whether he would want former President Bill Clinton to campaign on his behalf. Kerry said yes. "What American would not trade the economy we had in the 1990s, the fact that we were not at war and young Americans were not deployed?"

Kerry's answer is revealing. We were, in fact, at war. The Clinton administration, with the exception of a few cruise missiles, had simply chosen not to fight back. Osama bin Laden, a sworn enemy of the United States, had launched attacks on our embassies and on a warship of the U.S. Navy. Saddam Hussein had defied U.N. weapons inspections, repeatedly threatened America, and attempted to assassinate former President Bush.

Furthermore, where does Kerry object to young Americans' being deployed? Afghanistan? But Kerry has criticized the Bush administration for an insufficient commitment of troops there. Iraq? But Kerry voted for the war and has said he would not cut and run.

So Kerry was simply indulging in demagoguery. He's not the only one. The Senate Intelligence Committee released its report on pre-Iraq intelligence failures last Friday. Jay Rockefeller, the committee's ranking Democrat, claimed that, because of the flawed intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, "Our standing in the world has never been lower. We have fostered a deep hatred of America in the Muslim world, and that will grow. As a direct consequence, our nation is more vulnerable today than ever before."

Consider the extremism of Rockefeller's statement. Our global standing has *never* been lower? Our nation is more vulnerable than *ever* before? Then consider the facts. Since the 9/11 attacks, the United States and its allies have deposed the Taliban in Afghanistan and overthrown Saddam Hussein's Baathist despotism in Iraq. The Pakistani/Libyan international nuclear weapons bazaar has been shut down. Al Qaeda operatives not already killed or captured are on the run, with no safe base of operations remaining in the world. All this has made us more vulnerable? If that's true, then it is the position of Senator Rockefeller that the American and allied soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq not only have accomplished nothing but have been counterproductive. This is a slander the Bush administration must answer—if not for its own sake, then for the honor of those who have sacrificed so much to make this country less vulnerable than it has been for years.

As for hatred of America, al Qaeda leaders were planning their attacks on New York and Washington back in those halcyon days of the Clinton era that John Kerry recalls with such nostalgia. Indeed, al Qaeda was left unmolested as it trained thousands of terrorists at camps in Afghanistan. And of course, lest we forget: On October 12, 2000, al Qaeda bombed the USS *Cole* off the coast of Yemen, killing 17 American sailors. On August 7, 1998, al Qaeda struck two U.S. embassies in East Africa killing 257—including 12 Americans—and injuring 5,000. During the 1990s, numerous other attacks were planned (the Millennium attack on the Los Angeles airport) or executed (the Khobar Towers attacks, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing). Those were the good old days when, by Jay Rockefeller's reckoning, America was less hated and less vulnerable.

The Senate Intelligence Committee faults the U.S. intelligence community for providing flawed intelligence to policymakers. But the intelligence community is not up for reelection this fall. The policymakers are. So many Democrats, with a compliant media, will be tempted to fall in behind Rockefeller. We'll soon be hearing a lot about the Bush administration's "exaggeration" of intelligence.

What the Bush campaign must do is remind Americans that the Iraq war was no mistake—that the case for the war was and is compelling, and that it used to be bipartisan. Jay Rockefeller, of all people, made that case well in an October 2002 floor speech: "Saddam's existing biological and chemical weapons capabilities pose a very real threat to America, now. Saddam has used chemical weapons before, both against Iraq's enemies and his own people. He is working to develop delivery systems like missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles that could bring these deadly weapons against U.S. forces and U.S. facilities in the Middle East." Rockefeller wasn't done. "He could make those weapons available to many terrorist groups which have contact with his government, and those groups could bring those weapons into the U.S. and unleash a devastating attack against American citizens. . . . Some argue it would be totally irrational for Saddam Hussein to initiate an attack against the mainland United States, and they believe he would not do it. But if Saddam Hussein thought he could attack America through terrorist proxies and cover the trail back to Baghdad, he might think it not so irrational."

Indeed. So it was right to remove him. And we are safer for having done so.

—*William Kristol*

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Cloturekampf

The candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court . . . the people will have ceased to be their own rulers.

—*Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861*

Senate Republicans deserve credit for pushing this week for a vote on a constitutional amendment that would define marriage in the United States as consisting only of the union of a man and a woman. Whether they will get that vote is an open question. Under Senate rules, 60 votes likely will be needed to cut off debate in order for a vote on the amendment to occur. Those who count heads in the Senate tell us that as few as two Democrats may be willing to vote for cloture, as it is called, and as many as 12 Republicans may be prepared to vote against it. The votes for cloture might not even total 50.

Yet if you believe that the courts ought not to be irrevocably fixing policy upon such a vital question as what constitutes marriage, there is merit, especially in an election year, in determining just who is and who is not willing to vote on an amendment that would enable the people to decide whether they want to settle the issue as they choose. Which is to say, consistent with their conviction that marriage is what it always has been—only the union of a man and a woman.

As matters now stand, marriage defined as the union of any two people is the policy of only one government—the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The policy was fixed by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts in a decision last November that ran roughshod over the legislature's constitutional authority. The federalist impulse in our shop says that maybe on the question of marriage nothing at all should be done—in which case a state would be allowed to go to hell in a handbasket, if that should be the desire of its judges, and the ruling is allowed to stand. We are reminded that states also can do the right thing, from our point of view, and in fact have. The people of Hawaii responded to their high court's decision implying a constitutional right of same-sex couples to marry by passing a constitutional amendment prohibiting such marriages. And the people of Alaska voted for a similar constitutional amendment in response to a lower-court judge's ruling announcing a right to same-sex marriage.

Nonetheless, it is now unlikely that the states will be able simply to do as they wish on the question of marriage. Under the Massachusetts Constitution, no amendment in response to the supreme judicial court's decision will be possible until 2006, and in the meantime there is no stopping same-sex nuptials, of which there have been thousands so far, including many from out of state. It is only a matter of time before some same-sex couples who have returned home file lawsuits pressing their states to recognize their unions.

A basis for their claim will be the federal Constitution's requirement that states give "full faith and credit" to other states' judicial proceedings. The federal Defense of Marriage Act of 1996 offers an authoritative interpretation of the "full faith and credit" clause designed to prevent the interstate transmission of same-sex marriage. But the Supreme Court has repeatedly told Congress that it lacks the power to do that, and there is no reason to think that the Court would change its mind.

The odds are strong, then, that same-sex marriage will travel via the federal courts to other states. There also remains a possibility that the Supreme Court itself might simply strike down the traditional definition of marriage. Recall that last summer in *Lawrence* v. *Texas* the Court, with Justice Anthony Kennedy writing, did not merely void the nation's sodomy laws. Kennedy also embraced an amorphous right to sexual liberty (untethered to constitutional text or history) that denies the historic right of the people to enact legislation based on their moral views. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, not incidentally, drew inspiration from Kennedy's *Lawrence* opinion.

The question facing the Senate and, for that matter, the House of Representatives, is whether federal judges should be allowed to decide the issue in the way they are likely to—or whether the American people should be given the opportunity to settle it through a constitutional amendment expressing their longstanding conviction about marriage. Even a failed cloture vote will give the country an idea of which senators understand—and which do not—that the definition of marriage is now an unavoidably national issue, and that, if marriage is to remain the union of a man and a woman, the issue will have to be addressed through a constitutional amendment.

—*Terry Eastland, for the Editors*

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The Bon Jovi Advantage

John Kerry makes time with '80s hair bands.

BY MATT LABASH

New York

DURING THE PARTS of this presidential campaign that I've managed to stay awake through, it's striking how few gaffes and humiliations John Kerry has suffered. When he does, they nearly always result from his flying his freak flag, trying to talk to the young people, or otherwise waiting for his hipster credit to get approved.

The vast share of such mishaps seem to be music-related. Sure, Kerry hasn't caused himself irreparable harm in the manner of Wes Clark, who proved himself unfit for office by admitting his favorite album was "Journey: Greatest Hits." But Kerry's staffers have disclosed that he likes to play favorite show tunes from *Evita* and *Cats* on his guitar. And he did tell MTV, "I'm fascinated by rap and by hip-hop. I think there's a lot of poetry in it." And who could forget when the nostalgia-prone Kerry took Peter Yarrow along for an Iowa hootenanny, and got caught toking an imaginary joint during a rendition of "Puff the Magic Dragon." Or the time Kerry, once a bassist in his prep-school band ("the producer of pulsating rhythm," album liner notes called him), was gigging with Moby, covering Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side." Moby, a mercenary soul who has suggested sandbagging Bush by having women present themselves as former girlfriends forced to have abortions by the president, failed to steer clear of the lyric where Reed's protagonist, Candy, never loses her head even while giving the same. Kerry froze up like a sallow-cheeked snowman.

With such promise of looming catastrophe, I parted with $500 and became a proud Kerry donor in order to gain entry into the July 8 "Concert for John Kerry" at Radio City Music Hall. Sponsored by *Rolling Stone*'s Jann Wenner and Miramax's Harvey Weinstein, the concert, originally slated during Ronald Reagan's funeral week, was part two of a series. The first occurred in Los Angeles two weeks ago, when Barbra Streisand somehow emerged from Reagan-related grieving and another of her serial retirements to sing specially tailored lyrics to "People" (*Bush seeza / Lotta Condoleezza / They're dividing the planet's oil / According to Richard Poil*). The GOP hit back hard, touting their online "Kerryoke Lounge," which reimagined Babs's "The Way We Were" as "The Flips We Flopped." Polls-wise, it's too early to tell if these duelling song parodies have caused a Ralph Nader surge.

Kerry kicked off last week's concert by mounting the stage with new sidekick John Edwards, who has managed to transform himself into Mr. Electricity since the primaries, when many of us in the vulture class thought the too-smooth-by-half Edwards was less suited to sell us his vision of America, more suited to sell us an extended power-train warranty on a Camry. There they stood, two well-tailored, half-windsored Monsters of Rock, before they plunged into the audience. From my perspective in the cheap seats (orchestra seats went for $1,000 minimum, helping reap a record $7.5 million one-night take), it seemed a bit early to stage-dive without the music having started in earnest. But in fact, the tandem just took the stairs, finding comfortable seats where they could clap off the beat for the next two and a half hours.

Jon Bon Jovi kicked things off with some stripped-down Richie Sambora-less versions of his hits. It seemed an appropriate choice, since Bon Jovi was the only man in the sold-out venue who could battle Edwards for top Breck-girl status, with his jojoba-enriched locks. Living legend Paul Newman was up next, doddering out in wise-owl glasses perched halfway down his nose, feisty as ever. A huge fan (I named a son after *Cool Hand Luke*), I was rooting for Newman, the cinematic icon and deep-pocketed philanthropist who has brought us so much joy over the years through his popcorn and salad dressings. But apparently, there's some things his money can't buy. Writers, for instance. Taking the night's first-of-many whacks at the Bush piñata, Newman mocked trickle-down tax cuts, saying rich coots like him hide their money in a sock. "Why, when the tax cuts were announced," he said by way of proof, "did the *sock* market go up 60 percent?"

Praise Ja that Wyclef Jean soon followed to put him out of his misery. Numerous reporters have noticed that Kerry and Edwards have jeopardized the platonic nature of their relationship since getting politically hitched, what with all the arm-touching, hair-mussing, and trapezius-squeezing. Some hoped that Wyclef would croon something suited for the budding romance, such as his song, "I'm the Only Gay Eskimo" (*I go out seal hunting with my best friend Tarka / But all I wanna do is get into his parka*).

No such luck. Instead, he refashioned lyrics, Babs-style, to "If I was the President," in which, imagining he was president, Wyclef would *get elected on Friday / hire Edwards on Saturday / have a big party Sunday / start the work on Monday*. Pedantry, of course, is the enemy of rock'n'roll, so let's leave aside the fact that Wyclef would actually be elected on a Tuesday, and would have selected his running mate long prior, leaving a scheduling hole

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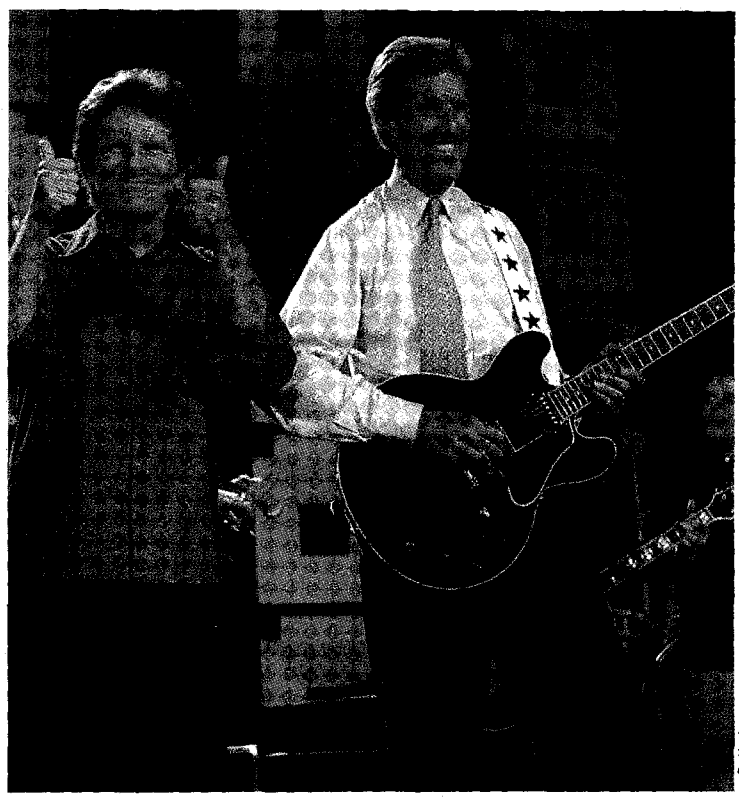
on Wednesday. Wyclef's original rendition offers the sort of clearheaded pragmatism one always relishes when singers dabble in the political arena, with the lyrics "*Find the best scientists / tell them, 'Come up with an answer' / I want the cure for AIDS and cancer.*" (Note to future Kerry surgeon general: See Wyclef about eradicating cancer.)

The actress Meryl Streep similarly demonstrated geopolitical naiveté, upbraiding Bush for riding shotgun with Jesus on his campaign bus, while discounting what Jesus would do vis-à-vis Iraq. Jesus, Streep reminded us, said blessed are the peacemakers, love thy neighbor as thyself, and turn the other cheek, so that your enemy may smite it also. (Note to future Kerry homeland security director: See Meryl about counterterrorism cheek-turning strategy.) Streep wondered what bomb, during shock-and-awe night, "Jesus, our president's *personal* Savior, would have personally dropped on the sleeping families of Baghdad." (Just a guess, but He'd probably have gone with the AGM Hellfire missile. It has precision laser-seekers and a global-positioning system, plus, the name's kind of cool.)

Not all were so shrill. The Dave Matthews Band, who most of the youngsters came to see, refrained from heavy-duty punditry, opting instead to prove that white people do the darndest things while dancing, as their fans performed heretofore unclassifiable movements such as Hoist the Shotput, Conduct the Orchestra, and Get Me My Medication.

John Mellencamp took the stage to sing "I was born in a small town," John Edwards's longtime campaign song. Unconfirmed reports have it that Edwards is the son of a millworker who actually hails from a small town. At one point, while Bon Jovi held down lead-vocal duties on Mellencamp's "Pink Houses," Mellencamp actually trekked to Edwards's seat for some sort of huggy/chest-bump. With so many blue-collar poseurs keeping company, it left one feeling sorry for Bob Seger and Bruce Springsteen, who must have been unable to knock off early from the factory.



Getty Images

Jamming with John Fogerty

But performers didn't just provide the gift of song, they also provided the gift of laughter, or tried. Many organizers would've opted to hire someone who was, say, funny. Kerry organizers thought it would be better to go with Chevy Chase and Whoopi Goldberg. Chase came out with an empty handcuff link, asking if anyone had seen Ken Lay. He then grew serious—or maybe he was still being funny, who could tell?—offering four-alarm groaners such as "Clinton [plays] sax, John plays the guitar, Bush, the lyre." Demonstrating the rapier wit that has earned him recent star turns in films like *Bad Meat* and *The Karate Dog*, Chase opined that Bush thinks "DNA" means "Daddy knows alright," and that he is "as bright as an egg timer."

Goldberg, for her part, worked totally blue. After repeatedly and condescendingly referring to Edwards as a "kid" ("he looks like he's about 18, card his ass"), she did what could charitably be called a Vagina Monologue: "Nothing has given me more pleasure than bush. . . . Someone has tarnished the word in the name of Bush. We went to war in the name of Bush . . . attempted to amend the Constitution in the name of Bush. . . . Keep bush where it belongs, not in the White House." Later, a Kerry spokesman told the *New York Times* that the candidates didn't necessarily agree with everything that was said tonight, but that performers have the right to speak their minds, since "that's the freedom John Kerry put his life on the line to defend."

And that, to quote John Edwards's laudation of Kerry, is what this night, and this campaign, is all about. It is a "celebration of *real* American values." It's about can-do optimism, a front-porch heartland ethos, and the telling of good, wholesome vagina jokes.

While Kerry took the stage with all the artists for the closing jam of "This Land is Your Land," he tepidly fingered his red-white-and-blue guitar as if the strings were fashioned from hot razorblades. As embarrassing as it all was, one takes small comfort from knowing how much worse it could have been. If Kerry had been a little more comfortable in this uncomfortable milieu, God knows what fate could've befallen us. He might even have subjected us to his old standby, the theme from *Cats*. ♦

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Delirious in Florida

The debut tour of the John-John ticket.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

Ft. Lauderdale

SUMMER'S HERE: It's 9 A.M., 91 degrees, brush fires rage in Miami-Dade County, and 7- and 8-year-old boys and girls scurry outside the main hangar of the Ft. Lauderdale Jet Center, enjoying a day off from school. The kids are here with their parents, over a thousand Florida Democrats, all waiting in line to catch a glimpse of John Kerry and his newly minted running mate, North Carolina senator John Edwards. Only a few hundred of them make it inside the hangar where the two Johns stump for less than an hour this morning, Thursday, July 8, but that doesn't stop more people from showing up, clad in Hawaiian prints and khaki shorts and reeking of sunscreen.

"These people are all on our list," says a Kerry volunteer. She's a junior at NYU. "When we found out the senator was coming, we let everyone on the list know." It looks like everyone showed up. Unfortunately, the crowd won't have much time with the two senators. Today's rally is only one stop on a four-day tour meant to introduce the Kerry-Edwards ticket to voters in Ohio, West Virginia, New Mexico, and Florida—all swing states in this year's presidential election. And right now, with four months to go, this swing state is swinging toward the challenger: The latest Zogby poll, conducted in late June, has Kerry winning here 46 to 44; pollster Jim Rasmussen has Kerry ahead in Florida 48 to 43.

Maybe that's why a celebratory air hangs over the Jet Center, commingling with the thick July haze. "You know, it feels like the last week of a campaign," says one Kerry press aide. He looks astonished. Sweat soaks through his dress shirt, but he doesn't seem to mind the heat. He's too busy thinking about today's *St. Petersburg Times*, which he shows to anyone passing by. The paper features an article on last night's rally at the St. Petersburg Coliseum. "How about that? Huh?" he asks no one in particular. "The police say 10,000 people showed up." He shakes his head. "Incredible."

Also incredible is the fact that somehow, in the space of the two hours before Kerry's plane touches the tarmac, each person in line has trudged through one of two metal detectors at the entrance to the hangar, pockets emptied and belongings searched. The crowd seems resigned to the security. The press isn't. Photographers and television cameramen moan when they discover their equipment needs to be searched by a bomb-sniffing dog—which, the Kerry campaign regrets to report, is 45 minutes away.

But eventually the dog shows up. And once they're inside the hangar, the "photogs" confront a chaotic scene: Bells are ringing, foghorns sounding; retirees are yelling, children laughing. Every few minutes, as a plane takes off from the nearby tarmac, people turn and watch, open-mouthed, silent, the roar of the turbines drowning out all other noise. Then a Telemundo crew is almost bowled over by a cameraman from one of Miami's adult cable stations, a buxom "reporter" in tow, and people start to laugh. There is no air conditioning inside the hangar. The place stinks of sweat. Everyone has a tan. And practically everyone wears a T-shirt with the name of a union emblazoned on the front. It's an organized-labor alphabet soup: AFSCME, SEIU, IUPAT. Only the Teamsters are without an acronym.

People fan themselves with today's newspaper. An ambulance waits nearby in case someone faints. Soon truckloads of bottled water appear on the tarmac, where the Teamsters, performing their ancient duty, offload them, passing the boxes into the hangar and distributing bottles among the mass of people. Kids splash water on their faces.

More trucks arrive. These carry portable toilets, and the IUPAT members decide to unload them. It's a tricky business. First the IUPAT guys set the toilets down in front of part of the crowd, which sparks howls of protest. One IUPAT member is stumped. He scratches his head, looking around the crowded hangar for a place to put them. The crowd boos and hisses. Eventually the IUPAT members figure out what to do. Smiles on their faces, they move the toilets directly in front of the press. The crowd applauds.

Moments pass before the crowd spots Kerry's campaign plane. Ponytailed Jim, the audio guy, cues up today's entrance music, Bruce Springsteen's "Land of Hope and Dreams":

Big wheels rolling through the fields / Where sunlight streams / Meet me in the land of hope and dreams . . .

A helicopter floats high above the tarmac, filming the scene.

Tomorrow there'll be sunshine / And all this darkness past . . .

John Kerry emerges from the plane, John Edwards behind him. They walk quickly, almost breaking into a jog toward the grandstand, hands raised toward their screaming supporters.

Each has his signature gesture on the stump. Kerry points with his long, thin index finger to someone in the crowd, flashes his small white teeth, then transitions smoothly to an emphatic thumbs-up. Edwards, in contrast, holds both thumbs up, high

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above his head, unleashing his chipmunk grin.

Hear the steel wheels singin'. . . Bells of freedom ringin'. . .

The music fades. Florida senator Bill Nelson introduces Edwards, to raucous applause. Edwards speaks quickly, knowing he has little time. "It's been an extraordinary few days," he says in his trademark drawl. He hits all his old campaign themes, resurrected from his failed primary run: "I grew up in a small town . . . the son of a mill worker." But Edwards's voice is hoarse. He must have strained it at last night's rally in St. Petersburg. It's hard to talk over 10,000 people. Or maybe he's not used to the grueling presidential campaign schedule, which carries him to six states in four days. Whatever the cause, his voice isn't just scratchy. It cracks, it squeaks, it breaks up, like a teenage boy's.

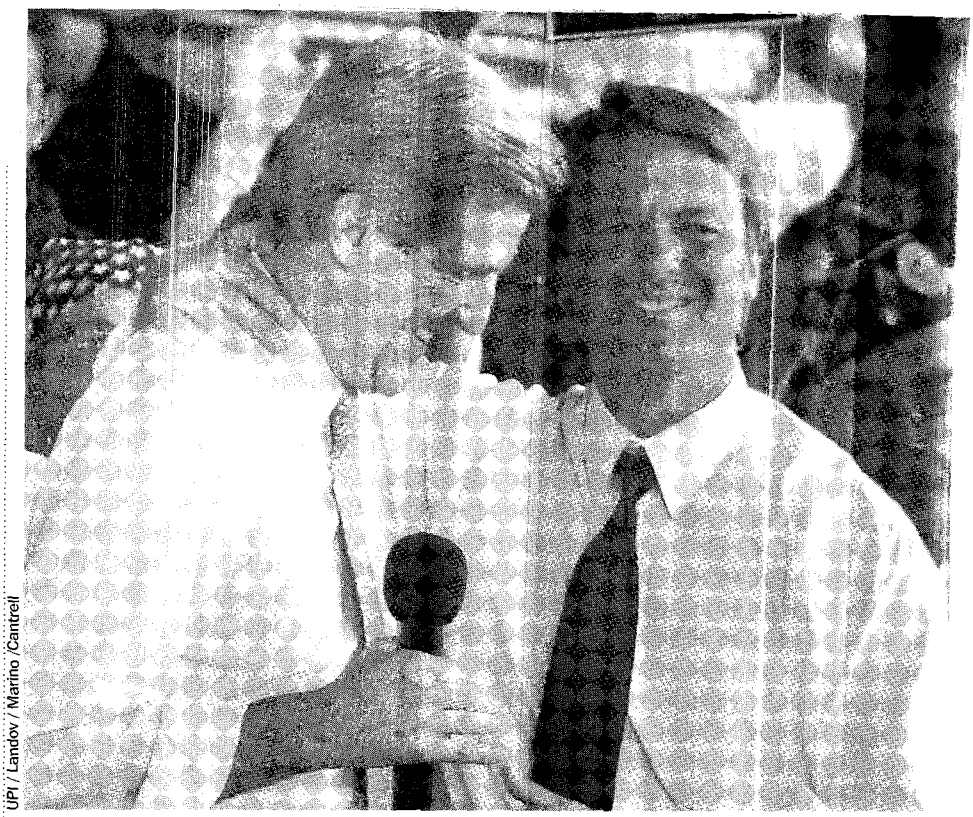
Yet Edwards persists. He and Kerry engage in a rhetorical dance, nodding toward the war in Iraq, but never naming that country. Not once. Ditto with Afghanistan. Instead Edwards and Kerry speak in innuendo. "John Kerry will keep the military strong, protect Americans, and keep strong alliances—so that no American goes to war needlessly, just because America wants to," Edwards says. "He will do what he did in Vietnam: protect Americans." He swallows. And "when John Kerry is president . . . he will tell the American people the truth."

Keh-ry! Keh-ry! Keh-ry!

Edwards stands back, passes the mike to his new boss, arms folded across his chest. Mission accomplished.

Kerry takes the mike. He paces the stage and nods. A plane takes off in the distance, and Kerry waits for the roar to dull. He asks, "So what do you think of my choice?" Cheers.

Then Kerry unveils a short stand-up routine. For someone who looks humorless, the man can crack a joke. Or, in this case, several. "Two Johns . . . Some people talk about the environment and how important recycling is," he says. "But we practice it. We saved you a lot of paper and a lot of ink." Laughs. "The only person who did better than John Kerry and John Edwards these past few days is *Spider Man*." Belly laughs. "John and I have a lot in common," he says. "We both share the first name John. And John was selected *People* magazine's sexiest politician of the year. I read *People* magazine." Even the press laughs at this one.



UPI / Landov / Marino /Cantrell

The two Johns in Ft. Lauderdale, July 8

Kerry says he's been spending some quality time with John Edwards's two young children. Jack is 4 and Emma Claire is 6. "They're good at math," he says. "They can count well." So "I promised them something . . . "

The applause builds. The crowd knows where this is going.

" . . . We're sending Jack and Emma Claire down here to help those Republicans in West Palm Beach count those votes."

More chants.

"And not only does every vote in Florida count, but every vote is going to be counted." Florida Democrats lap this stuff up, so Kerry continues to feed it to them. "I made a deal with the people who are working on the voting machines," he says. "They fix those machines, and we'll fix America."

Soon the one-liners are over, however, and Kerry moves into his stump speech, sometimes drifting into uncharted waters, unmoored, bobbing up and down, awash in profundity. He starts talking about how it feels, "looking at you," this "sea of human beings, sea of American citizens, sea of people," and why the faces in the crowd tell him so much about American ingenuity. We can build the microchip, he says. Why can't we have universal health care?

The crowd stares at the candidate, enraptured.

A lady with stringy blonde hair turns away from Kerry and faces the television cameras and photographers. She must be hot, wearing a white wool sweater over her T-shirt. Her blush is smeared. She smiles at the cameras and pulls a large piece of red cardboard from her purse.

"We're going to fight for the middle class," Kerry says. "I pledge to you: We will never privatize Social Security."

The blonde woman unfolds the red cardboard. It's a sign. "No More Blood for Oil." She parades in front of the cameras like a card girl at a boxing match.

"It's the workers, the people in the foundry, the people in the fields, the people in the factory, who must bring America back again," Kerry says.

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A man in black is wandering aimlessly. He's half paying attention to Kerry as he looks for a bottle of water. The thing about him is the T-shirt he's wearing. It's a black and white photo of the president. Above and below the president are the words "International Terrorist."

Kerry challenges the crowd to perform "the work of democracy," which means badgering your friends to vote. Then he takes a bow and waves at the cameras. After four hours of preparation, the rally is over in 45 minutes.

Their hero gone, the fans exit smiling, gabbing cheerfully, relieved to get out of the sauna-like hangar and into their air-conditioned cars. A few scrawny college kids are waiting outside. They're dressed in white Ralph Nader T-shirts, hemp and seashell necklaces around their necks. Some distribute Green party literature. Another holds a sign that says simply: "John Kerry, I respect you, but unless you moderate your pro-war stance I won't be able to vote for you." The kids are quiet. They look mournful.

"Echhhh!" snorts a tall man with curly hair. He's with his wife. "Don't throw your vote away!" he shouts at the kids. He snorts again. "We can't afford people like you!"

The kids stare at him blankly.

"Don't you get it?" he yells. "We can't have another four years of this guy! Don't waste your vote!" He's screaming now, enraged, even as he walks past the Green party protesters. But there's something more. His voice is almost plaintive. He's practically begging the Naderites. "We can't afford you!" he yells again.

"Harry," his wife mutters. She's embarrassed. She pushes Harry toward their car. "Give it a break."

"I can't," Harry says. He looks past his wife, talking to the other Kerry supporters walking around him, and shakes his head. "This is too important."

He lowers his head and stares at the black pavement. A drop of sweat falls off his face and plops to the ground.

He speaks softly. "This is just too goddamn important." ♦

Why Bush Is Losing

And how he can turn it around.

BY JEFFREY BELL & FRANK CANNON

THE NOVEMBER ELECTION won't be about the future of Iraq. John Kerry's selection of John Edwards, who joined Kerry and a majority of Senate Democrats in voting to authorize the U.S. invasion of Iraq, is merely the final confirmation of the Kerry campaign's decision to remove forward-looking Iraq policy from the roster of issues in the fall campaign.

If Kerry had wanted to argue the Richard Clarke/Howard Dean thesis that the invasion of Iraq was a colossal blunder, his course of action would have been simple. He would have picked as a running mate Florida senator Bob Graham, or someone else who opposed the move into Iraq, and explained his own vote to authorize the invasion as a mistake, based on the same faulty intelligence that misled George W. Bush and Tony Blair about the presence in Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. Then the debate over Iraq would have dominated the fall campaign.

In the four months since he clinched the Democratic nomination, John Kerry in his methodical way has moved heaven and earth to make sure such a debate never happens. He favors the Allawi interim government, the U.N. resolution of support for that government, the national elections this coming January, the writing of a democratic constitution by the winners of that election, and an American military presence for as long as our troops are needed to provide security for Iraq's democratic transition. In other words, his position is no more than a millimeter from that of President Bush.

Looked at another way, four months ago the conventional wisdom was that Kerry would downplay his 2002 vote to authorize Bush to invade. Instead, he has decided to play down his 2003 vote to deny money for U.S. operations in Iraq.

There are two corollaries to Kerry's unobtrusive but decisive repositioning on Iraq. (1) George W. Bush has won the war debate, or at the very least is continuing to dominate it. (2) Kerry's me-too hawkishness has hurt him in the virulently anti-Bush Democratic base very little if at all. Today, Kerry is well positioned to defeat a president who, in his response to the mass murders of 9/11, has eliminated the anti-American rogue states of Afghanistan and Iraq, achieved breakthroughs on the long-term realignment of Pakistan and Libya, and set a reluctant Middle East on a path toward democracy that goes far beyond anything achieved or even talked about in the past.

This isn't supposed to be happening. Decisive, event-making presidents are not supposed to be in danger of defeat while their crisis or war is still going strong. It's easy to understand why Jimmy Carter was tossed out of office with U.S. hostages still in Iran: He was not only not an event-making president; by Election Day he had been widely written off as a passive victim of events. We can even understand why a war leader like Churchill, or a foreign-policy president like the first Bush, could be tossed out after their wars, hot or cold as the case may be, had definitively ended: They were no longer needed in their area of specialty.

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But July 2004 finds the United States far from a postwar environment. Casualties continue in Iraq, Islamist terrorists destroyed a popular conservative government in Spain and cost Washington an important ally, the Saudi oil kingdom looks as unstable as it has ever looked, and everyone wonders if the United States can get through the November election without a major terrorist event at home. Yet by almost any measure, Bush has been a decisive, effective war president. If you doubt that, ask yourself why his Democratic opponent, so dripping with disdain for Bush's leadership, is unwilling to advocate a rollback of a single one of the administration's key war decisions.

Still, the president has job approval numbers that put him only a bit above the level of one-term presidents. And as in previous wartime elections, a strong economy is not helping him any more than it helped the Democrats in 1952 or 1968. Recent polls show Bush's rating on the economy not only not improving, but tracking close to his rating on his conduct of the war, which has never been lower.

As recently as December, the picture was very different. Saddam Hussein was captured on December 13, and despite the continuing Sunni insurgency and American casualties, Bush's approval rating on the war was in the 60s. The Democratic frontrunner, Howard Dean, embarrassed himself by commenting that Saddam's capture made us no safer, a revealing moment from which he never really recovered.

In the Democratic presidential caucus in dovish Iowa on January 19, candidates who had supported the congressional authorization for the president to invade Iraq received more than 80 percent of the votes. The conventional wisdom among many Democrats was that their best chance of beating Bush was for the war to fall out of the headlines, returning the debate to the domestic issues where Democrats were assumed to have their strongest arguments.

What happened to change that? Other things may later have added to Bush's problems, but the only set of events that coincides with the precipitous decline in Bush's job approval is the resignation of chief weapons inspector David Kay and his statement that, contrary to what he and virtually everyone else had thought, Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction at the time of the U.S. invasion.

Kay's message was internalized by voters over several weeks. By the end of that period, Bush's approval rating for Iraq, and for his overall handling of the presidency, had sunk roughly to where it is today. Kerry clinched the nomination in early March and has been running roughly even with Bush ever since. Clearly, the Kay revelations caused something to snap.

But the Bush decline was far from uniform. The failure to find the WMD hurt him most among Democrats and independents. It hurt him least among Republicans and conservatives—his core vote.

Immediately after 9/11, Bush gained broad support for his handling of the war from voters of all descriptions. It didn't take long for things to get partisan again, yet the off-year elections of November 2002 saw small but unusual GOP gains at every level. In 2003, the year of Iraq, Bush's war rating varied considerably. The April capture of Baghdad and the December capture of Saddam gave him solid bumps, but his rating stayed comfortably high all year. The Kay resignation left Bush with essentially no greater support than in the 2000 election. Since then, but only since then, it has been hard to find Gore voters planning to vote to reelect Bush. Why?

It seems clear that Kerry, the Democrats, and their allies in elite opinion have pinned the WMD fiasco on Bush as a kind of character issue. This is the message of Al Gore, no less than of Michael Moore. On a rational level it makes no sense. If Bush knew Saddam's weapons were a fiction, he had to know he was buying himself enormous trouble, post-invasion. Bush of course believed the weapons were there, as did the British, the French, the Germans, and the Russians—not to mention John Kerry, the leading beneficiary of Bush's loss of credibility.

Nor can it be argued that Bush could have limited the political damage with some shrewder handling of the revelations. The president went to Congress and to the United Nations and put great emphasis on the dangers of WMD in Saddam's hands, as he should have, given the available intelligence. The weapons have not been found. If there is some way to make voters feel better than they do about this, we have no idea what it is.

It is possible, of course, that things could go so well in Iraq that Bush could hang on to win reelection. There are two problems with this. The first is that the enemy in Iraq has no interest in making Bush look good. The second is that the nature of Bush's decline since the beginning of the year makes it hard to reverse among that slice of the electorate that turned against him.

That is because, much as the president and supporters of his foreign policy might wish otherwise, the country is deeply polarized in its partisan allegiance. Kerry's ability to move to the right on Iraq, with little or no damage to his candidacy in the Blue states, confirms that the split is not about the war, however defined. Five years ago at this time, Bill Clinton was a war leader in the former Yugoslavia, and many of his congressional opponents were Republicans. The split is still about our deepest values.

If it is about any one thing, it is about God. It is a truism that if you went to a religious service in the last week or so, you probably are voting for Bush-Cheney. If you didn't, you're probably voting for Kerry-Edwards.

The economic models assembled by such estimable professors as Ray Fair say Gore should have won handily in 2000. Bush and his team upset the calculations by running a character campaign against the Clinton administration. Gore was well aware of it, and wriggled mightily to get out from under the Clinton label.

Those same economic models predict a comfortable Bush victory today. Kerry and Edwards, with help from Michael Moore and (inadvertently) David Kay, plan to avoid any serious

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debate on the economy or the war and defeat Bush with a character campaign. They are on track to achieve this result.

But the character issue is a pale derivative of the values issues, and a paramount values issue looms: the advent of gay marriage, presently in Massachusetts and inevitably everywhere else if federal and state judges have their way. The Senate's first big vote on a constitutional amendment to preserve marriage will come this week. It will get nowhere near the two-thirds majority needed, but most Republicans will be on one side, most Democrats on the other.

That is far from true of the rank-and-file followers of the parties. In Ohio, for example, at least two reputable polls suggest that more than half of Ohio *Democrats* are hostile to gay marriage. Such Democrats now plan to vote for Kerry. They may know that Bush is more in favor of traditional marriage, but they have (at this writing) no reason to think this is one of the issues likely to be decided by the presidential vote.

It is not in the interest of Democrats for them to think differently, and Republicans have shied away from the issue, as they have on most such values issues since the elections of the 1980s. No matter how much a prospective issue favors a given side, there remains an understandable reluctance to incur elite condemnation as a purveyor of hate. But then again, how much lower on the moral scale could one fall after inventing tales of nonexistent Iraqi weapons in order to start a war that kills women and children on behalf of Halliburton?

Recent press analyses of Kerry and other Democratic speakers note a sharp increase in the incidence of the word "values." Strategists for both sides sense that beneath the messy surface of wartime politics, a politics of values is operating more deeply than ever. If the version of this that surfaces in 2004 is the character issue, advantage Kerry-Edwards. If the debate deepens into the realm of religion, life, and the preservation of marriage, advantage Bush-Cheney. ♦

John Kerry, Reactionary

He's against a heroic foreign policy.

BY TOM DONNELLY & VANCE SERCHUK

WITH HIS JULY 4 OP-ED in the *Washington Post*, "A Realistic Path in Iraq," presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry lays claim to being the genuinely conservative foreign-policy voice in this fall's election. Arguing that, in Iraq and in the greater Middle East, the United States needs "a policy that finally includes a heavy dose of realism," Kerry sounds more like Henry Kissinger than the Massachusetts liberal of Republican party dreams.

There's undoubtedly a good deal of campaign strategy in this. The idea of attacking Bush from the right is just the sort of man-bites-dog angle that appeals equally to Beltway political junkies and journalists. In any event, it makes the 2004 election not just a referendum on Iraq per se, but on the principles that should guide the use of American power in the world. The contest is between Bush the revolutionary and Kerry the reactionary.

The "realism" of Kerry's July 4 column comes as no surprise to those who have followed the senator's campaign. For several months, Kerry has downplayed democracy in Iraq, insisting, "I have always said from day one . . . that the goal here is a stable Iraq, not whether or not that's a full democracy." The idea that the greater Middle East suffers from a freedom deficit has found little resonance with Kerry; speaking with the editors of the *Washington Post*, he explained that, if elected, he would emphasize political reform and human rights in Egypt and Saudi Arabia less than traditional U.S. interests such as "general stability in the Middle East."

Writing in the *New Republic* this spring, Franklin Foer made a persuasive case that Kerry learned his realism at an early age, from his father. Richard Kerry spent much of his professional life as a foreign service officer, and seems to have imbibed the antidemocratic habits of that trade. Richard Kerry's 1990 memoir, *The Star-Spangled Mirror*, complained about excessive American moralism in international affairs. The United States, wrote Kerry *père*, committed the "fatal error" of "propagating democracy" throughout the Cold War and failed "to see the parallel between our use of military power in distant parts of the world and the Soviet uses of military power outside the Soviet Union." The book concludes, reports Foer, in "a plea for a hardheaded, realist foreign policy that removes any pretense of U.S. moral authority."

Joshua Micah Marshall, in an article in the current *Atlantic Monthly*, likens Kerry's realist attitudes to those of George Bush senior and his national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft. It's a comparison that Rand Beers, Kerry's top foreign policy adviser, and another Kerry aide, Dan Feldman, welcome.

Part of the allure of this ideology is that it's supposed to be the "mature" approach to national security policy: sober, coolly calculating, and adult. And indeed to social scientists of the realist persuasion, their understanding of international politics is less a matter of choice than a descrip-

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tion of the world: All actors on the world stage are governed by a Leviathan-like logic propelling them to maximize their own power. All states, regardless of their internal politics (democracy, dictatorship, whatever), act in accordance with the dictates of power, and all seeming differences in international behavior can be explained in this way if fully investigated and correctly understood.

The gods of realism of the nineteenth century—Talleyrand, Metternich, Bismarck—were the masters of realpolitik and the balance of power, wherein process and purpose are often hard to distinguish. These were great statesmen, to be sure, but their talents were at the service of deeply conservative regimes increasingly more fearful of their own people than of their fellow kings and kaisers.

Translated through the works and careers of the "wise men" of the late 1940s and early 1950s, then of Henry Kissinger, these attitudes wormed their way into American strategy-making. Fittingly, Kerry's op-ed urged that we "look back at NATO and the Marshall Plan, the enduring creations of the Truman administration." Never mind that this analysis leaves out half the story—neglecting, for example, the Truman Doctrine, which unilaterally pledged American support to "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressures"; the decision to fight in Korea; and NSC-68, which "militarized" the Cold War. Hans Morgenthau, dean of American realists, forcefully argued against each of these policies, and Dean Acheson routinely complained of Truman's annoying habit of seeing the Cold War in moral terms, of making bold speeches "clearer than truth."

The Nixon-Kissinger strategy of détente with the Soviet Union remains perhaps the purest American example of the practice of realism. It sought simply to manage the relationship with the Soviet Union by "balancing" the Communists in Moscow with the Communists in Beijing. It was in these years that "moral equivalence" between East and West slipped into the mainstream of U.S. strategic thought, and so a critique advanced by left-wing dissenters during the Vietnam years was adopted by a right-wing administration in the White House. Not even Ronald Reagan could thoroughly uproot this entrenched ideology, for with the collapse of the Soviet empire, many realists pressed to maintain the balance of power—by restraining America.

Thus, Senator Kerry, in voting against the first Gulf War, explained that he feared the conflict would augur a "new world order" in which the United States would shoulder disproportionate responsibility. "Can it really be said that we are building a new world order when it is almost exclusively the United States who will be fighting in the desert, not alone but almost, displaying pride and impatience and implementing what essentially amounts to a Pax Americana?"

For the past decade, this fear of American power has defined political realists of both parties. Steeped in an understanding of international politics that held balancing as the highest virtue, this analysis warned against "hyperpower" and jumped excitedly at the slightest sign of its decline—whether absolute or relative. Our hegemony was itself marginally more tolerable during the Clinton years, when the president and his lieutenants were content to lecture the world on theories of "assertive multilateralism," and threats against the U.S. homeland appeared less pressing. (Notably, however, after President Clinton in his second inaugural address described the United States as "the indispensable nation," Senator Kerry reportedly recoiled, asking an aide: "Why are we adopting such an arrogant, obnoxious tone?")

Initially, of course, George W. Bush seemed the very model of a modern, post-Cold War realist. During his campaign, his foreign policy advisers—the so-called Vulcans—adopted the same disdain for the puerile vanities of a moralistic foreign policy as many conservative critics of President Clinton. But since 9/11, the realists think the president has lost his perspective. As Lawrence Kaplan has observed, the insurgency in Iraq has ushered in a "springtime for realism," complete with a Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy. Founding member Gary Hart sniffs: "The extravagance, not to say the arrogance of this epic undertaking [of transforming the greater Middle East] is sufficiently breathtaking in its hubris to make Woodrow Wilson blush."

Alas, in a one-superpower world, it's hard to be a humble hegemon. But the problem is not just that realism fails as an assessment of the actual balance of power—the United States enjoys an unprecedented preponderance of strength, a fact that will not soon change, regardless of what happens in either Iraq or the White House. The root of the problem is that "realism" of this sort is deeply at odds with both American political principles and American national interests.

There is a reason that Richard Kerry felt himself a "dissident" from the "intensely moral outlook" of the Cold War. In the long twilight struggle against the Soviet Union, it was Americans' faith in the universality of liberty, capitalism, and self-determination that sustained our commitments to like-minded allies around the world and weakened our enemies, ultimately converting them to our principles. But just as realism disdained that broader war of ideas, today it disparages the intensely moralistic outlook of President Bush and the "forward strategy of freedom" he has articulated in the fight against Islamist terrorism.

Perhaps, for many on the left, this is simply the expression of an intense loathing for President Bush. Still, it is notable that the Kerry camp—presumably more clear-eyed about such matters—is attacking less the often-bumbling means by which the administration has tried to bring democracy to Iraq, than the wisdom of the effort itself. Rand Beers,

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Kerry's top foreign policy adviser, recently told the *Los Angeles Times*, "We have been concerned for some time that Bush's position about having some kind of democratic state [in Iraq] was too heroic."

To be sure, there is a huge risk of hubris in attempting to foster democratization across the greater Middle East—a danger that the Bush administration has not appreciated as keenly as it should. Yet the status quo is intolerable, and there are worse offenses than excessive ambition in trying to change it. And just when did the American left begin to sneer at heroic efforts to improve the world?

The deeper problem for realists, of course, is that American interests and American principles are inextricably bound together in Iraq. Iraqis' tolerance of foreign troops has always dangled on the thread of the belief that the United States will help empower the Iraqi people, not consign them to life under yet another strongman. In particular, the support of the majority Shia has been contingent on U.S. guarantees of democratic elections. Should we retreat from these assurances, it will destroy the very stability that the realists claim to prize.

If the terms "liberal" and "conservative" still had any meaning in American foreign policy, George Bush would happily style himself the true liberal—the radical, even—in the upcoming election and paint Kerry as the conservative, the reactionary. Indeed, it's hard to conceive of anything more repugnant to American principles—or blind to American interests—than "conserving" the current political order in the Middle East.

It is one thing to argue that strategy and statecraft demand that we pick our fights carefully, with a due regard for the sacrifices Americans will be asked to make in blood and treasure. It is another altogether to say that prudence demands that we pick our principles so as to avoid sacrifice. Always shameful, such a position is also, in a post-9/11 world, profoundly unrealistic. ♦

Two Out of Three Ain't Bad

Assessing the Supreme Court's detainee rulings.

BY PETER BERKOWITZ

GIVEN his constitutional role as commander in chief, with principal responsibility for the nation's security, the president might be expected to overreach occasionally in times of war, to place the energetic defense of the country ahead of the meticulous safeguarding of civil liberties. Equally, given its constitutional role as guardian of the fundamental laws of the land, the Supreme Court might be expected to patrol zealously the boundaries established by the Constitution for the protection of individual liberty, and occasionally even to go to an extreme to ensure that the executive respects them. And as a consequence of the wartime contest between the executive and the Court, as each seeks to advance the interests and uphold the honor of its constitutional office, one could reasonably hope that both national security and civil liberties would be given their due to the extent possible.

On the basis of the Court's decisions in the enemy combatant detention cases, handed down June 28, it is a pleasure to report that the system is working more or less as designed. In waging the war on terror, the executive branch has certainly pushed the legal limits of its prerogatives. And the Supreme Court has responded, pushing back, at times quite aggressively, in the opposite direction.

This is certainly not to suggest that the legal positions of the administration have been ideal, or that in *Hamdi* v. *Rumsfeld*, *Rumsfeld* v. *Padilla*, and *Rasul* v. *Bush* the Court achieved an optimal balance between national security and civil liberties. To the contrary. The Bush administration, for example, suffered self-inflicted wounds when it refused to grant the detainees at Guantanamo Bay the adequate minimal process, well grounded in the laws of war, for determining whether the government had correctly classified them as enemy combatants. And in *Rasul* v. *Bush* a provoked Court struck back. It ruled that noncitizen or alien enemy combatants who have not set foot in the United States and are detained outside of the territorial jurisdiction of any U.S. federal court nevertheless have a right to challenge their detentions in any federal district court they please. Unfortunately, to reach this result the Court distorted its own cases, arrogating to itself a scope of review of military detentions it had not previously been thought to possess.

So, the Supreme Court now having spoken, there remains work to be done in hammering out the proper balance between waging the present war effectively and maintaining the rule of law scrupulously. This is particularly challenging as the nation confronts a shadowy adversary, himself ruthlessly indifferent to the distinction between lawful combatants and civilian noncombatants, who has at his disposal or is bent on obtaining weapons of great destructiveness. Still, the United States is at war, and the constitutional order holds.

Indeed, notwithstanding its overreaching, the Court's decisions vindicated the core constitutional principle that there is no unreviewable executive power to detain individuals. To

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be sure, in none of the cases did the government deny the right to due process. What was at issue in all three was the degree of process due an individual designated by the military, or the president directly, as an enemy combatant. In essence, the government contended that it was enough to assert facts that, if true, would warrant such a designation. And the Court ruled, in sum, that individuals held as enemy combatants—whether citizens or aliens, whether held in the United States or abroad—had the right to challenge before an impartial tribunal the factual allegations on the basis of which they had been captured and incarcerated.

In *Hamdi* v. *Rumsfeld*, the court struck the balance nicely. Seized on the battlefield in Afghanistan in 2001, Yaser Esam Hamdi, a U.S. citizen, has been detained in the United States since April 2002 without formal charges or proceedings. This was necessary, argued the Bush administration, not only to prevent him from returning to fight with the enemy (the internationally recognized justification for the detention of enemy combatants) but also in order to subject him to extended interrogation that could yield precious information concerning al Qaeda's whereabouts, intentions, and capabilities. Hamdi's court-appointed counsel countered that indefinite military detention without charge or trial in a war that could last the detainee's lifetime violated his Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment due process rights, in particular the right of all persons detained in the United States to the writ of habeas corpus, the legal means by which a detainee asks a court to review the basis for his imprisonment.

Writing for a plurality and announcing the judgment of the Court, Justice O'Connor recognized the force of both parties' arguments. Just as there is no bar to holding a U.S. citizen as an enemy combatant, she reasoned, so too being held as an enemy combatant should not prohibit a U.S. citizen from invoking his constitutional rights. While she rejected the notion that a citizen held in the United States as an enemy combatant was entitled to the full panoply of protections under the Constitution for citizens charged with *criminal* conduct, Justice O'Connor did rule that the government must give citizens alleged to be enemy combatants and held in the United States "a meaningful opportunity to contest the factual basis for that detention before a neutral decision maker."

The case of Jose Padilla, who came to the United States in May 2002 allegedly to lay the groundwork for a dirty bomb attack, presented an even stronger challenge to indefinite military detention without charge or trial. Padilla not only is a U.S. citizen but also was seized on U.S. soil. The Court, however, in a 5-4 opinion authored by Justice Rehnquist, declined to rule on the merits on the grounds that Padilla had failed to bring his challenge to the federal district court that had jurisdiction to hear it and, in bringing the suit against Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, had failed to identify the correct respondent, namely, the commanding officer at the South Carolina Navy brig in which he was imprisoned.

The Court seemed bent on sending a message to the administration regardless of the settled law that it needed to trample to do so.

How strange, therefore, that the Court ruled in favor of the detainees in *Rasul* v. *Bush*. In contrast to Padilla, they were alien enemy combatants not citizens, held outside the United States not inside the country, and they filed suit against the president rather than the commander at Guantanamo Bay. In fact, the Court seemed bent on sending a message to the administration regardless of the settled law that it needed to trample to do so.

Contrary to University of Chicago law professor Cass Sunstein, who argued in the *New York Times* that the Court in *Rasul* decided the issues before it in the "narrowest possible fashion," the Court reached its result by silently and tendentiously overruling the controlling precedent. In *Johnson* v. *Eisentrager* (1950), the Court held that it is a precondition for the filing of a writ of habeas corpus by an alien detainee that he be held within the territorial jurisdiction of a U.S. court. In keeping with *Eisentrager*, the Supreme Court might have narrowly ruled that the Guantanamo Bay detainees have a right to challenge their detentions in U.S. courts because U.S. control over Guantanamo Bay, by longstanding agreement with Cuba, amounts to in all but name the exercise of sovereignty. In fact, in a 6-3 decision written by Justice Stevens, the Court appears to have ruled, extravagantly, that U.S. federal district courts may hear legal challenges from alien enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay because U.S. courts have jurisdiction wherever the U.S. military holds foreign enemy combatants inasmuch as U.S. courts have jurisdiction over the secretary of defense and his boss, the president.

The constitutional contest between the executive and the judiciary over how to balance the competing claims of security and liberty is by design perennial. At the same time, and also by design, there is only so much the executive and the judiciary, given their limited powers, can accomplish. It would be welcome, therefore, in the next round for the third branch, Congress, to step in and clarify not only the jurisdiction of federal courts in the case of alien enemy combatants held abroad, but also the details of the procedural protections due citizens wherever they are held as enemy combatants. Both the circumstances and the constitutional system call for this. ♦

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Edwards vs. Kerry

Look who doesn't buy the presidential candidate's critique of the Iraq war. BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

"THE UNITED STATES of America should never go to war because it wants to," said John Kerry last weekend in a speech in Cloquet, Minn., accusing the Bush administration of bellicosity. "We should only go to war because we have to."

Did we go to war in Iraq just because we wanted to, or because Iraq posed a threat? Kerry's new running mate John Edwards addressed that question from the Senate floor on October 10, 2002, explaining his decision to vote to authorize war in Iraq.

"I'm here to speak in support of the resolution before us, which I cosponsored. I believe we must vote for this resolution not because we want war, but because the national security of our country requires action."

We do this dance every four years. Politicians from the same party trash each other in a primary and then, when they later join hands, reporters dig up all of the bad things they said about each other. (Remember "voodoo economics"?) It can be a tiresome routine. But this year's Kerry-Edwards paper trail is an exception. Why? Because Edwards, it turns out, has almost eerily anticipated and answered Kerry's chief criticisms of the Bush administration's Iraq policy:

The Bush administration "misled America." Kerry is fond these days of claiming that the Bush administration "misled" the country to go to war in Iraq. Here he is during a June 25 appearance on *Nightline* with Ted Koppel. The administration "deeply misled the American people. I think the evidence is quite clear."

For Edwards, however, the evidence wasn't quite so clear. "So did I get misled? No. I didn't get misled," he said on *Hardball* with Chris Matthews on October 13, 2003, almost a year to the day after he voted to authorize the Iraq war and some six months after major combat ended. When Matthews followed up, asking Edwards if he got an "honest reading on the intelligence," the junior senator from North Carolina seemed to place much of the blame on the intelligence community.

EDWARDS: "And as you know, I serve on the Senate Intelligence Committee. So it wasn't just the Bush administration. I sat in meeting after meeting after meeting where we were told about the presence of weapons of mass destruction. There is clearly a disconnect between what we were told and what, in fact, we found there."

What's more, on February 24, 2002, Edwards was asked by CNN's John King about President Bush's labeling of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil." His response: "You know, the most imminent, clear and present threat to our country is not the same from those three countries. I think Iraq is the most serious and imminent threat to our country. . . . And they do, in my judgment, present different threats. And I think Iraq and Saddam Hussein present the most serious and most imminent threat."

The Iraq war and the war on terror. "This administration took its eye off of al Qaeda," Kerry told reporters in Detroit on June 17, "took its eye off of the real war on terror, which was in Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan, and transferred it for reasons of its own to Iraq." Asked what those reasons were, Kerry was coy: "You have to ask the administration."

He might have directed those same reporters to Edwards, who said this on October 10, 2002. "Others argue that if even our allies support us, we should not support this resolution because confronting Iraq now would undermine the long-term fight against terrorist groups like al Qaeda. Yet, I believe that this is not an either-or choice. Our national security requires us to do both, and we can."

Going it alone. In a December 3, 2003, speech Kerry accused Bush of going to war "almost alone." Worse, he continued, "the United Nations is divided, years of work is torn apart, and we are fighting an increasingly deadly guerrilla war in Iraq almost single-handedly. We have lost the goodwill of the world, and overextended our troops, and endangered rather than enhanced our own security. I believed a year ago and I believe now that we had to hold Saddam Hussein accountable and that we, the United States, needed to lead in that effort. But this administration did it in the worst possible way: without the United Nations, without our allies, without a legitimate plan to win the peace."

Edwards by contrast, in his *Hardball* appearance two months before Kerry's speech, understood that "we couldn't let those who could veto in the Security Council hold us hostage."

> MATTHEWS: Were we right to go to this war alone, basically without the Europeans behind us? Was that something we had to do?
>
> EDWARDS: I think that we were right to go. I think we were right to go to the United Nations. I think we couldn't let those who could veto in the Security Council hold us hostage. And I think Saddam Hussein being gone is good. Good for the American people, good for the security of that region of the world, and good for the Iraqi people.
>
> MATTHEWS: If you think the decision, which was made by the president, when basically he saw the French weren't with us and the

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Germans and the Russians weren't with us, was he right to say, "We're going anyway"?

EDWARDS: I stand behind my support of that, yes.

Does Edwards still believe that he wasn't "misled"? That the Iraq war was a necessary component of the broader war on terror? That President Bush was right to refuse to be held "hostage" by the U.N.?

Judging from remarks he made in his first full day as a candidate for vice president, the answer to questions two and three is "no."

"With John Kerry as president of the United States no young American will ever go to war needlessly because America has decided to go it alone."

How long will it take Edwards to claim that he, too, was "misled" by the Bush administration? ♦

The Good Ayatollah

What Iraq's leading Shia cleric teaches.

BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

MUCH HOPE is presently vested, by friends of a free Iraq, in the 74-year-old grand ayatollah, Sayyid Ali al-Husseini Sistani. Ayatollah Sistani acts as a *marja*, or religious guide, for many if not most Iraqi Shia Muslims from his residence in the holy city of Najaf. Since the Shia make up about 60 percent of Iraq's population, it is a matter of some interest to know just where the grand ayatollah would lead his followers.

Sistani has thus far been an unwavering advocate of elected government in Iraq (far more steadfast than the Coalition itself). And now it is possible to ascertain his views on another important matter—relations between Muslims and non-Muslims—thanks to a volume of Sistani's pronouncements (*fatwas*) offering guidance to Muslims living abroad. *A Code of Practice for Muslims in the West* was dictated to Abdul Hadi al-Hakim and translated by Syed Muhammad Rizvi from an Arabic text approved by Sistani's office in the Iranian religious center of Qum. It can be downloaded at *www.sistani.org/html/eng* or bought from Islamic booksellers.

For the novice, any work of Islamic jurisprudence might prove difficult to navigate. Certainly, there is much here to disconcert the reader unfamiliar with the strict Shia sect. The book begins, for example, by warning that Muslims should not emigrate to non-Muslim countries unless they are certain that doing so will not undermine their faith or that of their relatives. Its pages mention numerous customs and notions alien to outsiders, like the prohibition on attendance at musical concerts intended purely for entertainment, rigorous habits of personal modesty, and acceptance of "temporary" as well as "permanent" marriage.

But more instructive than looking for exotic features of Shia teaching is a comparison of Sistani's views on key questions with those propounded by Wahhabi Islam, the official sect of Saudi Arabia. Wahhabi teaching is propagated via websites, newspapers, sermons, and lectures, in thousands of Sunni mosques and by Islamist organizations throughout the world. It is the contrast between Sistani's teaching and that of the Wahhabis that shows quite plainly who are our enemies and who are our friends.

A good place to start is the question whether Muslims living in the West may participate in electoral politics. Sistani answers yes, the Wahhabis answer no. And the difference between them in tone could hardly be greater.

The Ayatollah Sistani not only states that Muslim citizens of Western nations may vote, he goes on to counsel that they may, and sometimes should, run for office: "At times the higher interests of the Muslims in non-Muslim countries demand that Muslims seek membership of political parties, and enter parliaments, and representative assemblies." While he specifies that such decisions must be submitted to consultation with "trustworthy experts," his view is that Muslim citizens of countries like Britain should participate in the political process on an equal basis with non-Muslims.

The Wahhabis' attitude toward elections was on display during the recent vote for the European Parliament. In Britain, which has a Muslim population of at least 1.5 million, widely reproduced Wahhabi propaganda posters, flyers, and website commentaries bore the headline "The Messenger Muhammad (S.A.W.) Is Our Example—Did He Ever Vote?" (S.A.W. stands for *Sallallahu Aleyhi wa-Sallam*, or May the Peace of God Be Upon Him, and is usually abbreviated in English PBUH.) One might as well ask whether the Messenger Muhammad ever rode a bus, spoke on the telephone, or wore glasses, but that was not the point. Rather, the intent was to keep Muslims removed from the political process of a democracy.

A typical Wahhabi rant under this headline may be read at the pro-bin Laden website al-Muhajiroun. It declaims, "Muslims must not vote for anyone in the present election, even if they say that they are going to get you some schools or other benefits for the Muslim community." That "some people go to Parliament or local councils and legislate and others vote for them to go there and do so" is "clear-

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cut *shirk*," or idol-worship. "How can a Muslim say there is no legislator except Allah," asks the piece, ". . . and then vote for someone else to legislate [the unbelievers'] law and order?"

Such blandishments accurately represent the all-or-nothing mentality of Wahhabis living in Britain, according to whom no government is legitimate except an Islamic one—which is why they fully intend to establish an Islamic government in place of the country's present parliamentary system.

The contrast between the mentality of Sistani and that of the Wahhabis is even starker when one turns to the simplest level of participation in community life: Should Muslims extend Christmas and New Year's greetings to their Christian neighbors? Sistani says yes, the Wahhabis say no.

Sistani states very simply: "It is permissible to greet the Jews and Christians and also [other non-Muslims] on the occasions they celebrate like the New Year, Christmas, Easter, and the Passover."

If we turn to the Wahhabi website *www.myiwc.com*, representing the "Islamic web community," we find a diatribe by Jamal al-Din Zarabozo. He writes that "it is not allowed for Muslims to congratulate the non-Muslims on their holidays and festivals. . . . It is one of the greatest sins in Allah's sight . . . a greater sin than congratulating them for drinking wine."

Zarabozo, whose rhetoric is notorious among Muslims for its excesses, cites a reported opinion by Abdullah ibn Umar, a companion of the Prophet Muhammad, that "whoever stays in the lands of the foreigners and celebrates their New Year's Days . . . shall be resurrected with them on the Day of Resurrection," that is, excluded from the Muslim hereafter. Zarabozo also cites an opinion of Ibn al Qayyim, a fourteenth-century disciple of Ibn Taymiyyah, the forerunner of Wahhabism, holding that Muslims should not even "sell Christians anything they may use in their holidays of meat, blood, or clothing, nor should they loan an animal to ride on, nor help with anything concerning [their] festival because all of that would be a way of dignifying their idolatry and helping them in their [unbelief]."

Moving on to actual friendships between Muslims, Christians, and Jews, Sistani welcomes them, the Wahhabis forbid them.

Sistani writes, "A Muslim is allowed to take non-Muslims for acquaintances and friends, to be sincere towards them and they be sincere towards him, to help them and they help him in fulfilling the needs of this life." He notes that Imam Jafar as-Sadiq, the founder of Shia jurisprudence, said, "If a Jewish person comes to sit with you, make that a good meeting."

Wahhabis teach that such relationships should be avoided at all costs. (The Muslim Students Association is especially pernicious in spreading this view among Muslim college students in North America.) The authoritative Wahhabi website *Islam Q&A* declares that "a Muslim's relationship with Muslims is different from his relationship with others. . . . With regard to non-Muslims, the Muslim should disavow himself of them, and he should not feel any love in his heart towards them. . . . If [the] Muslim has to be with [non-Muslims] physically, he should not be with them in his heart, and he must avoid mixing with them unnecessarily. . . . The rights of Allah and His Book and His Prophet are more important than our personal rights. Remember this, for this is one of the things that will help you to hate them and regard them as enemies until they believe in Allah alone."

Some Wahhabis have adopted a viewpoint slightly less harsh. Abdullah Ibn Abd ur-Rahman Jibreen, a prominent Saudi cleric and state religious functionary whose *fatwa* against hijackings has been used to paint the Wahhabis as enemies of terrorism, concedes, "It is allowed to mix with the disbelievers, sit with them and be polite with them as means of calling them to Allah, explaining to them the teachings of Islam, encouraging them to enter this religion and to make it clear to them the good result of accepting the religion and the evil result of punishment for those who turn away. For this purpose, being a companion to them and showing love for them is overlooked in order to reach that good final goal."

It is true that Shia and Wahhabi leaders have one unfortunate point of agreement: Both call on Muslims in the West to boycott Israeli products. Wahhabis, however, are instructed to go the extra mile and boycott American products as well. The differences between the dour, rigid mentality that Saudi Arabia seeks to impose and the moderate views of Ayatollah Sistani, meanwhile, extend to matters as trivial as depictions of human beings (Wahhabis command that such paintings be destroyed; Sistani accepts them) and as grave as punishments for adultery (the Wahhabis kill an adulteress; Sistani writes that "it is not permissible for [a Muslim man] to kill [a Muslim woman who commits adultery], even if he sees her in the act").

Most important, perhaps, Sistani's book makes no mention of concepts, dear to Muslim radicals, such as the goal of establishing Islamic rule in Western countries and the duty to fight *jihad* in non-Muslim lands. Instead, Sistani exhorts the Muslim living in a non-Muslim nation that when he has made a commitment "to abide by the laws of that country"—as he implicitly has in signing immigration documents—he must keep his promise.

The lesson here is simple and essential: The Ayatollah Sistani does not seek to promote a clash of civilizations or a conflict between religions. He does not teach the necessity of aggressive *dawa* (Islamic evangelism) or *jihad* against non-Muslims. The Saudis and their Wahhabi servants insist on both.

And that, of course, is a major reason why extremist Saudi clerics incite Muslims to kidnap and murder Americans and other non-Muslims on Saudi soil. It is also why Saudi Arabia so fears a democratic, Shia-led Iraq on its northern border, and why Wahhabi preachers urge pious Muslims to kill and die fighting all who defend the new Iraq. ♦

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The Sorry State of the CIA

And why it's unlikely to improve

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

Because of Iraq, and a continuing Washington blood-feud over the decision to go to war, both Congress and the press are perhaps more focused on the Central Intelligence Agency than at any time since the Church committee hearings of the 1970s. The departure of George Tenet as director of central intelligence should be an occasion for taking stock, with a view to revitalizing the Agency. Yet its muscle-bound bureaucratization, combined with the failure of the press to accurately represent to the public and to the rest of the government the Agency's actual problems, not to mention the tenor of the current recriminations, holds out little hope that we will see the innovation needed to combat bin Ladenism on the ground: the deployment of a new cadre of operatives working inside organizations like al Qaeda. Despite Tenet's constant discussion of rebuilding the clandestine service, we are still largely stuck in the past.

When I entered the CIA in 1985, Aldrich Ames's treason and the Iran-contra scandal were in gestation, yet headquarters in Langley, Virginia, seemed a happy place. The vast majority of officers were pleased to have William Casey as the director of central intelligence. The die-hard cold warrior had clout at the White House, which meant money from Capitol Hill and respect. The Carter years had been, everyone inside said, a time of drift. The revolution in Iran—the CIA's utter failure to see it coming—and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan—an event belatedly foreseen and poorly understood at Langley—had depressed an institution battered morally by the 1970s. It was difficult to find spooks who liked President Jimmy Carter's director, Stansfield Turner, always reproached inside the clandestine service as a prig.

Under Casey, the Directorate of Operations, the official name of the clandestine service, was awash with cash and manpower. During Ronald Reagan's presidency, the CIA wasn't loved by the liberal establishment from which it had sprung, but neither was it as scorned as it had been under Presidents Gerald Ford and Carter. Of course, insiders had complaints. Many senior DO officers didn't like Casey's love of covert action. Vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, the United States was being, for them, too provocative. For most operatives, espionage was the finest, if not the first, calling of American intelligence overseas. Some analysts in the Directorate of Intelligence, which politically has usually been somewhat to the left of the Operations Directorate, thought similarly. Within the DI, there were concerns that Casey and the Reagan White House were trying to encourage analysis depicting the Soviet Union as more menacing than it really was. (Neither case officers nor analysts are as overtly political as the average American diplomat, who is more often than not staunchly Democratic. But they are not politically neutered creatures, tenaciously holding on to some all-American civil-servant middle ground. Case officers tend to be more earthy and politically incorrect than analysts and diplomats, but such a disposition doesn't necessarily produce hawkishness in foreign affairs or skepticism about the welfare state.) Politics aside, Casey's tenure seemed to most in Langley, and in the stations and bases worldwide, a good if not golden age.

It's good to remember Casey and his CIA when judging George Tenet's tenure as director of central intelligence. In their institutional affections, in their grand vision of how the CIA fits into American power and government, in the (sometimes unjust) criticisms made of them, and in their ultimate failure to build and run competent espionage organizations, the two men are quite similar. It is, of course, their failure to confront the espionage problem that is the least appreciated outside the Agency. The truth is, Langley has waged clandestine-intelligence collection operations in a surreal way, whether against the Soviet empire and a miscellany of other targets during the Cold

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War or, most damningly of late, against Islamic holy-warrior terrorists. Accepted wisdom has already formed about Casey and Tenet's both nurturing a rebirth of the clandestine service from the doldrums of their predecessors. More than any other directors since the 1950s, they certainly sought to restore the operational joie de vivre and glory of American intelligence.

Both men, above all else, loved the Directorate of Operations, and viewed it as the preeminent organization within the CIA, which was for them the cutting edge of the intelligence community. The eavesdroppers at the National Security Agency may receive vastly more money than Langley—and have unquestionably done more for America's national security than the clandestine service—but it's enormously hard to become excited about the highly compartmentalized, aesthetically sterile, computer-driven NSA. Indeed, Tenet's affection for the operations directorate has been more profound and sentimental than was Casey's. Casey's youthful experience in the Office of Strategic Services, the CIA's World War II predecessor, whetted an appetite for the ever-alluring possibilities and romance of intelligence collection. However, his collision with the real world of the CIA in the 1980s, with its long cable-clearance processes and case-officer caution, left the director thinking less of his beloved institution. The Iran-contra scandal was, in part, a product of Casey's frustration with the CIA's highly bureaucratic, legalistic ethos. It's a good bet that William Casey always thought he gave more shadowy allure to Langley than Langley gave to him.

George Tenet, who grew to manhood in the bureaucracies of Congress and the executive branch, didn't seem to find the Agency's paper-pushing beyond repair or even particularly vexing. Tenet is a gifted Washington wonk whose identity probably has been overwhelmingly defined by the government jobs he has held. A review of Tenet's speeches since he became director of central intelligence gives the distinct impression that he, the son of poor Greek immigrants, couldn't believe he'd actually become America's chief spook. According to folks who've known him since his days as a congressional staffer, Tenet's streetwise, common-man cockiness and use of colorful language expanded significantly when he became director. Though the emotional antithesis of the most renowned, bureaucratically agile case officer-turned-CIA director, Richard Helms, Tenet loves to be seen as the man keeping the nation's secrets, and loves to suggest that the CIA actually has some amazing secrets in its possession.

And by and large, the press—especially the journalists on the intelligence beat—has translated Tenet's enthusiasm for foreign-intelligence collection, and his increased budgets and personnel for the clandestine service, as evidence that the Operations Directorate is in better shape now than at any time since the end of the Cold War. This same journalistic attitude existed in the Casey years: William Casey may have been a law-breaking rogue, but he was at least turning the clandestine service again into a serious espionage service. The crisis of 9/11 and the perceived failure of American intelligence in tracking weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have tarnished somewhat the perception that the CIA under Tenet has been on the mend. But even severe critics of Tenet's management—like the chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Republican senator Pat Roberts of Kansas—usually concede that Tenet has improved the Agency's HUMINT capabilities. The evolution of the reporting by *Newsweek*'s Evan Thomas, who has a serious interest in American intelligence, is a good barometer of where Tenet's reputation stands. After the war in Afghanistan, the Agency under George Tenet, according to *Newsweek*, was *back!* After the war in Iraq, Tenet's prognostication that it will take another five years to rebuild the CIA into an all-round first-rate institution—assuming the next director continues Tenet's new strategic plan—is too optimistic. According to Thomas, successful refurbishing will likely take a decade.

To which one must ask, A decade of doing what? What is it exactly that Thomas thinks Tenet was doing right? Thomas certainly has a sensitive understanding of the Agency's "halcyon" days, when the very best men didn't necessarily produce the very best results. Money, manpower, focus, seriousness of purpose, a real fear of the enemy, a true unabashed, unashamed love of human intelligence collection, a "willingness to take risks"—William Casey and his CIA had all this. But in practice the good old days were mostly a myth. For the Directorate of Operations, the 1980s were years of routine operational dishonesty, whose principal source was a defective system for determining who got promoted.

Under this system, thousands of agents were recruited abroad neither for their intelligence-reporting potential nor their operational utility. They were put on the books—case officers often referred to the sport as "collecting scalps"—because that is how CIA operatives earned promotion. With some exceptions—extraordinary handling of foreign agents could win you bonus points—the "head count" was *the* way to professional success. For most case officers, the Cold War was a backdrop for the constant search for an easy "developmental," somebody who could be quickly turned into a "recruitment" for the annual performance report.

Based on years of conversations with active-duty and retired case officers and the reading of operational and

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intelligence files going back to the 1950s, I believe the exaggeration surrounding the recruitment of agents was worse in the Casey years than it had been before (more money always fortifies a bureaucracy's bad habits), but the institutional disposition to accept "recruitments" without too much reflection, to encourage young case officers to recruit "aggressively," as if foreigners with truly valuable information were willing to commit treason in sufficient numbers to sustain a promotion system primarily based on "scalps," went back to the Agency's early years. In the dark days of the Cold War, when American officials feared major, potentially cataclysmic Soviet breakthroughs, it is understandable that the CIA, new to the game of global espionage and covert action, would more indiscriminately recruit foreign agents. And spying is often adrenalin-rich. When men are so enjoying themselves, they can easily equate the thrill of clandestine operations with their importance.

Under Casey, the Directorate of Operations simply didn't admit it had a systemic problem with recruitments, a problem that had morally and operationally hollowed out the organization. Occasionally, the truth, or at least part of the truth, could be heard. A Soviet Division chief would let it slip that all of our valuable Soviet agents, never many in number, were volunteers. That is, case officers had not recruited them—they'd come forward to offer their services to the United States. Indeed, chasing Soviet and East European targets might even have been counterproductive. Star case officers now and then pushed their exaggeration of agent recruitment into outright, sloppy, blatant deceit. Much of the American right looks at William Casey as a Cold War hero, and there is a strong case to be made that Casey's covert-action enthusiasms, especially in the Third World and Poland, diminished the Soviet empire's will and resources. But the gentleman as an espionage boss appears to have had no idea that his organization was a wreck.

And it is essential to remember that throughout the 1980s, the press and the oversight committees of Congress also really had no idea of what was going on. Yes, Iran-contra got everybody's attention. A former CIA officer fleeing to Moscow also could, for awhile, grab the headlines. So, too, rumors of missing or dead Russian agents. By and large, however, press reporting on the Agency hasn't been a helpful tool in understanding the Directorate of Operations's real problems.

It is quite striking to see how Congress, the executive branch, and the press reinforce the zeitgeist about the current state of the CIA. When senators and congressmen and their staffers on the intelligence oversight committees cite press reports about the mood inside Langley, one realizes how light the grasp often is on Capitol Hill of the spirit and mechanics of American intelligence. For if journalism is usually a significant force in American life in creating pressure for the reform of dysfunctional institutions, it is less so with regard to the intelligence community. For obvious reasons—the CIA is a secret organization, and clandestine-service officers usually have a reflexive distaste for the press—the fourth estate isn't good at keeping the heat on Langley, unless it is spoon-fed by Congress's oversight committees or an angry rival executive-branch agency with some knowledge of CIA methods, operations, and intelligence. To be sure, journalists' natural love of secrets inclines them to write sexy stories—Bob Woodward's books are classics in the genre. But there is probably no harder beat in Washington. Journalists rarely have unauthorized access to the junior and mid-level case officers who do the lion's share of the serious espionage work and are the most likely to depict accurately the strengths and weaknesses of the institution. What's more, the penalty for writing consistently negative stories about CIA competence can be quite high for journalists, who can ill afford to lose access to officially sanctioned leaks and background briefings.

Now, as in the days of Iran-contra, the CIA is front-page news. Odds are Tenet and his Agency will get hammered for all the wrong reasons. The report of the Senate Committee on Intelligence published on August 9 will probably be the first salvo in a barrage against Tenet over the Iraq war intelligence. However, Tenet's February 5, 2004, speech on Iraq and weapons of mass destruction will likely stand the test of time and prove a truer, more measured, historical document than the assessment of the Senate's intelligence committee. It is easily Tenet's finest speech and it is, amazingly, the only serious defense so far given by any Bush administration official against the charges of conspiracy, deceit, and incompetence surrounding the WMD issue. And once the Senate's unclassified and classified report become public knowledge, and outsiders can properly assess the historical knowledge of the staffers and senators who wrote it, Tenet could well ask for an apology.

When you stack up the Agency's assessment of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq during the Clinton administration and under Bush, the continuity of Tenet's positions is compelling. It is most unlikely that either he or politically ambitious CIA managers below him ginned up intelligence on Saddam Hussein's WMD programs. (The concerted nature of this hypothetical effort conjures up a Costa Gavras film.) Historians who get their hands on the Senate's report and earlier Clinton-era CIA assessments—the ones that convinced the former CIA analyst

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and National Security Council staffer Kenneth Pollack to write an influential book arguing for war—will likely have little hesitation asserting that Vice President Dick Cheney pressured no one in the CIA to recast his views either before or after President Bush made the decision to invade. In time, when political passions cool over the Iraq war, the Agency reporting on WMD will likely be seen as consistent and sober if not error free. And the influence of defectors provided by Ahmad Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress and Iyad Allawi's Iraqi National Accord will also likely be seen to have been negligible, if not nonexistent.

Historians will probably view CIA reporting on the Iraq WMD threat as no less responsible than Agency analysis of the WMD threat from the former Soviet Union. That analysis certainly had its flaws, but these were the result primarily of questionable assumptions about Soviet statistics and economics and a failure to assess accurately the Soviet Union's willingness to feed its military complex at unsustainable levels. The CIA was certainly guilty then of "group think"—a charge now hurled by the Senate committee at the Directorate of Intelligence. But the CIA is *always* guilty of "group think" since Agency reports, and especially national intelligence estimates, are designed to reflect the collective wisdom of the organization and the intelligence community. That wisdom may be flawed—unconventional, brilliant insights into countries or people almost always come from individuals working alone or in very small groups, marrying their intuition with facts. For better or worse, the American intelligence community is allergic to this kind of analysis, which it usually condemns as "subjective." The Senate select committee, which has been receiving the Agency's "group think" pieces for decades, could have, perhaps, complained about this method and style earlier.

It is also absolutely true that George Tenet's CIA failed to penetrate Saddam Hussein's inner circle. And only penetrations at the highest political and scientific levels could have possibly given us evidence that Saddam Hussein had decided to give up his billion-dollar, decades-long quest to develop weapons of mass destruction. (And note the plural "penetrations": Against such a proficient counter-espionage regime, there would have to be more than one penetration, assessed for protracted periods of time, before it would be possible to believe that the information from these assets was not disinformation.) But it is also true that the CIA failed to penetrate Moscow's inner circle in the Cold War and that the great agents we did have (the most valuable were probably scientists) were all volunteers. The CIA was not similarly lucky with Saddam Hussein's regime, whose Orwellian grip on Iraqi society was as savage as Joseph Stalin's on the USSR. It's a very good bet that the CIA has not had a single penetration in the inner circle of any of its totalitarian adversaries. The same is probably true for the French, British, and Israeli foreign intelligence services. In other words, one simply cannot judge the caliber of a Western espionage service by its ability to penetrate the power circles of totalitarian regimes. The difficulties are just overwhelming.

One can, however, grade intelligence services on whether they have established operational methods that would maximize the chances of success against less demanding targets—for example, against Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda, which is by definition an ecumenical organization constantly searching for holy-warrior recruits. It is by this standard that George Tenet failed and the CIA will continue to fail, assuming it maintains its current practices. But the odds are poor that the White House, Congress, and the press will condemn the Agency for its failure to develop a workable strategy and tactics against the Islamic terrorist target. The politically charged Iraq war, like Iran-contra before it, will now dominate Washington's view of the Agency.

The time to start demanding meaningful Agency reform was immediately after 9/11, when passions were high and entrenched bureaucratic habits could more easily have been overcome. It is most unlikely the 9/11 Commission will generate similar heat with its final report. The abysmal espionage apparatus that William Casey presided over was decades in the making. It was in great part structurally foreordained: Not only the promotion system but also the decision to deploy the vast majority of case officers overseas under official cover—posing as U.S. diplomats, military officers, and so on—set in motion a counterproductive psychology and methods of operation that still dominate the CIA today.

The relatively young men who are poised to become the most senior officers of the clandestine service will likely be overwhelmingly from the Near East Division, as was true through much of Casey's tenure. These men gained their professional identites in the 1980s. The odds aren't good that they think it necessary to overturn the structure that promoted them.

The Directorate of Operations has very reluctantly realized that it had problems with agent recruitment and its promotion system in the past. But it has stubbornly refused to admit that these problems were systemic. Case officers who fail in the recruitment sweepstakes will simply make busywork for themselves, and this busywork will inevitably corrupt the ethos of the organization. And there is simply no way that case officers—who still today are overwhelmingly deployed overseas under official cover or, worse, at home in ever-larger task forces—can possibly

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meet, recruit, or neutralize the most dangerous targets in a sensible, sustainable way. With the politicization of the Agency over Iraq, a helpful nuts and bolts discussion of operations just isn't likely to happen.

Yet a concrete discussion is precisely what is needed. Successful espionage operations against al Qaeda and other Islamic terrorist organizations would be defined by the efforts of a small group of men who seed themselves into these organizations. Some, probably most, of these men would need to be actual case officers—CIA employees—not foreign agents the CIA has recruited. The complexity of the task, target, and culture demands a level and reliability of information that would come much more easily from case officers acting as jihadists. The CIA will be a serious espionage organization ready for the twenty-first century only when its professional ranks are dominated in numbers and influence by such officers, who operate far away from U.S. embassies and consulates.

The entire system for finding, training, and deploying overseas case officers of this type needs to be completely overhauled. The "farm," the legendary training ground for case officers in the woody swamps of Virginia, ought to be abandoned. It has never had much relevance to the practice of espionage overseas. It is a symbol of the Agency's lack of seriousness. This new cadre needs to be a breed apart. Their operational half-life in the field might be at most ten years. It is hard to imagine them married and with kids. It is also hard to imagine their coming into being unless these jihadist moles are well paid. A starting salary of a quarter of a million dollars a year would be reasonable. Outsiders will know such a change is afoot when there are rumors of case officers' regularly dying abroad.

This is not likely to happen, of course. Tenet, like Casey, will be damned for the wrong things. And if another 9/11 happens, we will start all over again, with more committees, investigations, recriminations, and blue-ribbon recommendations. Another director will come, and the Agency—in the press at least—will again be reborn. We can all be thankful, of course, that bin Ladenism will in the end be defeated not by the prowess of American intelligence, but by the democratization of the Middle East. Otherwise, we would be effectively defenseless against a small, tightly knit platoon of holy warriors who live to kill and die. ♦

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Europe's Itinerant Imams

Can the radical mosques be tamed with homegrown, moderate clerics?

By Robert Leiken

A specter stalks Europe—the itinerant foreign imam who preaches holy war to minions in Muslim enclaves. The most immediate *jihadi* threat to the West comes not from the Middle East but from immigrant imams residing right in Europe. Now, Britain's agreement to extradite the most notorious terrorist imam, Abu Hamza al Masri, may be a sign that the Europeans are waking to the danger posed by radical Muslim preachers.

If there is to be another mass terrorist attack on the United States, the chances are that it is being confected across the Atlantic under the influence of a foreign imam. According to the French Interior Ministry only 10 percent of some 1,500 imams in France are French citizens and fewer than half speak French. According to Zaki Badawi, the dean of the Muslim College in London, the majority of imams in the United Kingdom are now imported from tribal regions of South Asia (Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh). They know neither English nor England. Their credentials consist of a fundamentalist interpretation of a Koran memorized in a *madrassa* funded by Saudi Arabia. In Britain, where Islamist sects openly recruited for the Taliban, such imams are imports preferred under the religious tolerance provisions of the Immigration Act of 1971. Once having secured entrance to any individual European country under the Schengen Treaty ending internal borders, these preachers crisscross Europe, often on Saudi funds, proselytizing and sometimes spreading messages from Osama bin Laden and forming networks for a new breed of terrorist such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

The itinerant imams, plus the Islamist students who loiter in European universities (like the infamous Hamburg cell that piloted 9/11), plus illegal aliens streaming across the Mediterranean (like the Moroccan sleeper cell that executed the Madrid bombings) comprise the immigrant first generation. But recruiters for holy war fish in a European pond stocked as well with unemployed and alienated second-generation Muslim immigrants, undigested by a continent wary of immigrants. In France, the jobless rate is 20 percent for immigrant men; it's about 9 percent for the native-born. In Germany, the rate is 15 percent for immigrants, 7 percent for native-born Germans. By contrast, in Australia, Canada, and the United States, the jobless rates for foreign and native-born workers are virtually the same. In Britain, average unemployment hovers around 2 percent, but for immigrants the rate is almost 5 percent.

Some of the jobless turn to crime and land in jail, where the more honorable try to turn their lives around. Not infrequently these jailhouse transformations are ministered by foreign imams. A French intelligence report on *jihad* recruitment notes that Islamization for "a minority" of French youth "represents a vehicle of protest against . . . problems of access to employment and housing, discrimination of various sorts, the very negative image of Islam in public opinion." A year ago the deputy director of the French interior intelligence service told me of his worries that foreign imams were radicalizing their flocks and hatching terrorist plots. One French authority on Islamism told the London *Guardian* that radical foreign imams find a susceptible audience in France's rundown suburbs: "The kids there already watch Arab stations on satellite TV, with the bloodthirsty slogans and anti-Western propaganda. They've already been radicalized."

Indeed, the proletarian suburbs of France and Belgium host Muslim militants who, when they are not staging strident anti-Semitic demonstrations, may mount a raucous defense of a rapist, such as that recently shown on *60 Minutes*. According to a government intelligence report, Islamism has become "an autonomous phenomenon" in

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the Netherlands, meaning that even without any influence from abroad some youths are embracing the radical fundamentalist line. It has become "part of the [Dutch] youth culture," and the same may be said about the youth culture in the Muslim enclaves of Belgium, Britain, France, and Spain.

Add to this mix not only imam recruiters but also al Qaeda and Zarqawi's concerted quest for bearers of Western passports, then stir with the U.S. Visa Waiver Program, and we are in a national security stew. Bin Laden and Zarqawi have been steadily recruiting European Muslims, partly because they are perfectly aware that, thanks to our reciprocal Visa Waiver Program with Western European countries, European nationals can fly to the United States without so much as an interview by U.S. officials. A Nixon Center study of 144 mujahedeen detained in Europe found that more than one-third (53) were European nationals and eligible for the Visa Waiver Program.

A few radical clerics—like Abu Qatada, said to be the spiritual counselor of September 11 ringleader Mohammed Atta and al Qaeda's "spiritual emissary to Europe"—languish in British prisons. But others—like Sheik Omar al Bakri, leader of a movement called Al Muhajiroun—are at liberty and carry on robust propaganda campaigns. The preeminent European performer and media darling for *jihad* was the telegenic, one-eyed, claw-handed imam, Abu Hamza al-Masri.

Hamza's north London Finsbury Park mosque was only the best-known Muslim house of worship to have been taken over by imams from South Asia and the Middle East. The mosque was the inspiration of the Prince of Wales and other British aristocrats. Two decades ago the prince approached King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, who sprang for £1.3 million to construct the modern red brick structure, with its four floors of prayer halls, in a largely Bangladeshi neighborhood. Conceived as a genteel, tolerant, cosmopolitan center of study, the mosque became a haven for terrorist suspects. When the original trustees attempted to resist the takeover, they were attacked by militant gangs who barred them from entering.

Enter Abu Hamza, who had arrived in Britain from his native Egypt to study engineering. In 1996 the former bouncer presented himself as a mediator. In return for resolving the trustees' conflict with the militants, Hamza secured a letter from the trustees allowing him to preach in the mosque. Soon worshippers began noticing groups of young men staying overnight there. Many were Algerians recruited by Djamel Beghal, an Algerian computer expert whom Osama bin Laden had assigned the task of setting up cells in Europe. Like Hamza an engaging figure, he circulated among the drifters and asylum-seekers steered to Finsbury Park, inviting them to linger after Friday prayers and join "study groups."

By the spring of 1998 Beghal had several would-be suicide bombers staying with him in the mosque. One was Richard Reid, the South London petty thief who would gain notoriety as "the shoe bomber." A second was Zacarias Moussaoui, whose brother, Abu Samad, blames Finsbury Park for radicalizing Zacarias. Other Finsbury Park terrorist all-stars included Ahmed Ressam, arrested attempting to bomb the Los Angeles airport at the Millennium; Anas al-Liby, now on the FBI's most wanted list and in whose Manchester flat police found al Qaeda's terror manual in 1995; several of the eight Britons to be held in Guantanamo Bay, such as the computer student Feroz Abassi, first recruited for weapons training in the mosque, and Rashid Ramda, then facing extradition to France for planning and financing the bombing of the Paris metro. The United States had its own representative in Earnest James Ujamaa, a Muslim convert who helped run the mosque's website in 1999 before returning home and trying to set up al Qaeda training camps in Oregon.

Questioned about these suspects, Hamza—dubbed "Captain Hook" by the British tabloids, in honor of the steel prosthetic device on his right hand—would insist that he knew nothing of their extremist links, noting with studied insouciance that "thousands of young people from all over the world come to hear me preach. I am very famous." Indeed, video and tape recordings of Hamza's sermons circulated in mosques throughout Britain and beyond. The Yemeni government sent evidence saying it was from his mosque that Abu Hamza's son, his stepson, and his press officer were recruited for a bombing mission in December 1998 against British targets in the port city of Aden.

Hamza's star began to fade in February 2003, when British authorities pursued a plot allegedly to poison British troops with ricin traced to camps in Kurdish sections of northern Iraq. One hundred fifty police in rapid-entry units, wearing full body armor and supported by armed officers, smashed a battering ram through the front door of the Finsbury Park mosque. The authorities found hundreds of documents used for identity forgery. Officers, having sought the advice of Muslim colleagues on "how to behave respectfully," covered their shoes and focused their search on offices, avoiding prayer spaces. The juxtaposition of such consultations with a battering ram indicates the intricacy of Britain's Muslim problem. In the wake of the raid the British media featured protests alleging violations of "the sanctity of a mosque to silence a preacher."

The enterprising Hamza, banned from preaching inside the Finsbury Park mosque, held forth outside the building every Friday afternoon. At one such gathering this past March, a week after the Madrid bombings, a mili-

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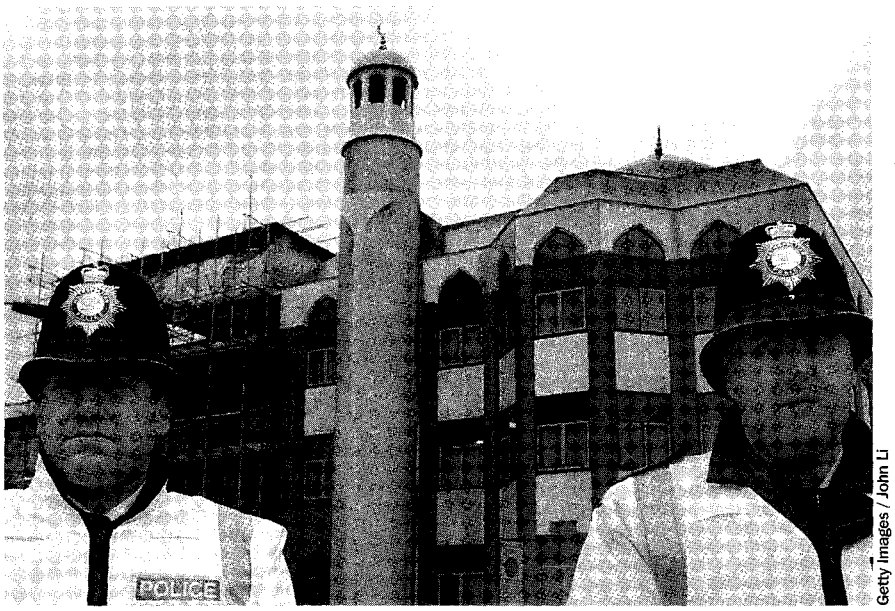

Getty Images / John Li

The Finsbury Park mosque after a police raid, January 20, 2003

tant with blond brows buttonholed me, vowing another attack on the United States. The look in his eyes was dead serious. As Richard Reid demonstrated, the Visa Waiver Program makes it child's play for a British citizen to board a plane bound for the United States.

On May 27, 2004, the British finally closed the Hamza show under U.S. prodding. On the basis of a new anti-terrorist extradition treaty signed with the United States, Scotland Yard busted the elusive imam and began extradition proceedings after an 11-count indictment was unsealed in New York. Attorney General John Ashcroft said Hamza faced charges of trying to establish a terrorist training base in Oregon in 1999, helping to recruit for al Qaeda, and abetting the taking of 16 tourists hostage in Yemen in 1998, which ended in several deaths. U.S. officials voiced concern that the arrest could spark reprisals against Americans in Europe.

The home secretary says he has an American pledge not to seek the death penalty for Hamza, a condition of extradition under British and European Union laws. The new extradition treaty sets a strict timetable for hearings and appeals so that within a year Hamza should be awaiting what promises to be the terrorist trial of the new century.

The Hamza arrest is part of a dawning European effort to restrain foreign radical imams. Calling them a public danger, France has deported more than a dozen imams in the past year and threatens to expel two more. Italy deported a Senegalese imam in November, calling him a "danger to state security." He warned that Italian soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan risked attack. Days later 19 Italians in Iraq were murdered—reportedly by Zarqawi's network. In March 2003 Britain jailed an imam from Jamaica for nine years for urging followers to kill Hindus, Jews, and Americans. After the Madrid bombings by a Moroccan sleeper cell influenced by a foreign imam, Spain is considering a law empowering authorities to monitor imams. But these efforts already have encountered opponents who brandish the banner of religious toleration. One of two imams expelled from France last month quickly won a court ruling allowing him to return.

Religious toleration is far too important to cede to the *jihadis*. John Stuart Mill wrote that the seminal battle for individual rights and democracy in the West concerned religious freedom. That cause shaped the American founding and creed and was the precursor to enlightenment and modernization in the West. As the Egyptian thinker Tarek Heggy reminds us, "the tolerant model" of Islam predominated into the twentieth century. Its renewal could revitalize and help to integrate Muslims in Europe.

More immediately, Europeans might listen to Zaki Badawi from the Muslim College of London, who proposes that the answer to the plague of foreign imams, imported from backward regions and unfamiliar with European languages and cultures, is a deliberate effort to educate second-generation European Muslims to be imams. In this, Europeans should heed the example of Abdellah Boussouf, an imam based in Strasbourg, who is working on a training program in concert with France's elected National Muslim Council, which groups the country's main Muslim organizations (from moderate to the more militant Muslim Brothers). The program is enthusiastically supported by the new French interior minister, Dominique de Villepin, who says French Muslims need to "face the issue of training imams . . . so that a real 'French Islam' can emerge."

Villepin is not proposing a government program to train Muslim ministers but calling on private divinity schools that respect human rights to act. Divinity schools centered in tolerance could also offer quality jobs to a few of Europe's Muslim immigrants and facilitate their entrance into society. When homegrown tolerant imams compete with foreign radical imams, one specter haunting Europe and the United States might be dispelled. In the meantime, radical foreign imams should remain an object of attention for intelligence services, security authorities, and journalists. ♦

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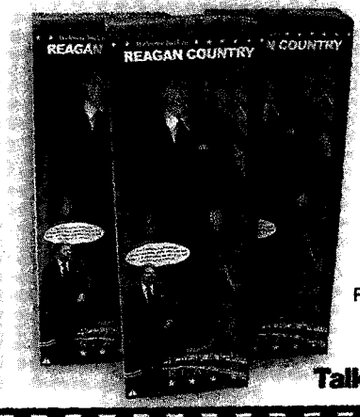

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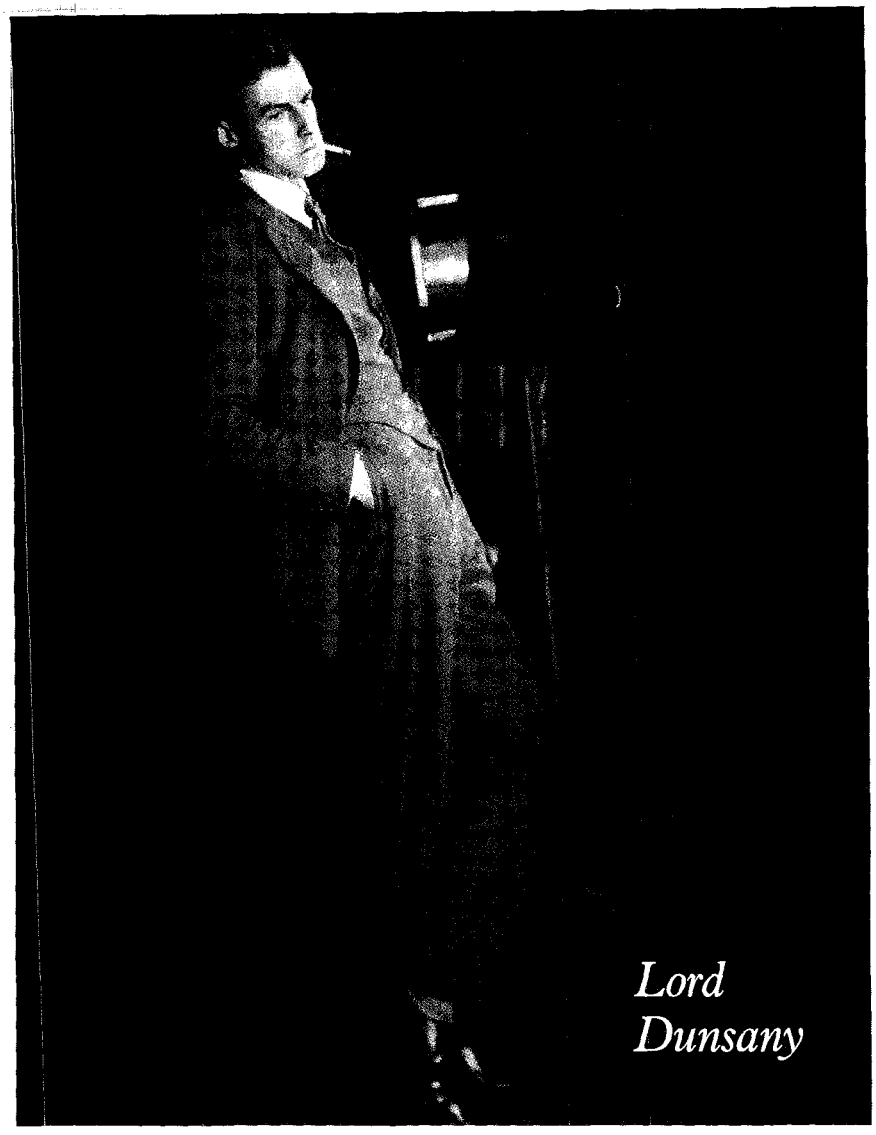
A Clubbable Man

Lord Dunsany's fantastic tales of Joseph Jorkens, the club storyteller, come back into print

By MICHAEL DIRDA



Lord Dunsany

E.O. Hoppé / CORBIS

Young authors typically display a brittle, cheeky glibness—or aspire to ziggurats of erudition and stylistic panache. The last thing a writer wants to be called, at twenty-five, is *charming*. And yet readers, particularly as they grow older, always return most happily to charming books, especially the ones they knew during their schooldays and adolescence. What did that sophisticate Noel Coward read in his last years? The Edwardian children's novels of E. Nesbit. Ask any older man or woman to choose a favorite work of fiction and the titles that come tripping from the tongue are likely to be *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and *Alice in Wonderland*, M.R. James's ghost stories and Agatha Christie's whodunits, the *voyages extraordinaires* of Jules Verne and the comedies of P.G. Wodehouse.

All these share a distinctive late-Victorian character, evoking a gas-lit 1895, even those set in the 1920s or later: country houses and hansom cabs, the Pax Britannica, the age-old routines of vicars and viceroys, a time of intrepid exploration by the sandy-haired into the far corners of the globe. You don't read such books so much as settle into them. Such cozy narratives may be derided as imperialist or antiquated, the stuff of sentimental fiction or of boys' adventures. But, at heart, many offer the purest form of storytelling: tales of wonder, tales of the unexpected. And few writers have been more brilliant at this game than Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, the eighteenth Baron Dunsany.

The Collected Jorkens
Volume 1
by Lord Dunsany
Nightshade. 343 pp., $35

Born in 1878 and living until 1957, Lord Dunsany is to modern fantasy what H.P. Lovecraft is to horror fiction and Georgette Heyer to the Regency romance: a major author within a minor—and often-disdained—branch of literature. Typically such genre writers, even the greatest, find themselves the object of cults rather than the subject of dissertations; their readers call themselves fans, and none of their books is ever taught in Literature 101. Yet when people ask for Something Good to Read, these are the authors that friends recommend.

Dunsany's most famous novel, *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (1924), remains a touchstone of lyrical fantasy; in it Prince Alveric crosses into the timeless land of faery, "beyond the fields we know," to win the love of the beautiful Lirazel and bring her back to his home. Distraught, her father uses one of his last two magic runes to waft his beloved child back to Elfland. It is a wonderfully touching story of loss and yearning, and of the ultimate return of magic to our world.

Though he was to publish more than sixty books of fiction, poetry, memoirs, and plays, Lord Dunsany

Michael Dirda, a longtime staff writer for the Washington Post Book World, *is the author of the recent memoir* An Open Book *and the forthcoming collection* Bound to Please: Essays on Great Writers and Their Books.

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established his reputation with his early fantasy collections: *The Gods of Pegana* (1905), *Time and the Gods* (1906), *The Sword of Welleran* (1908). In them he boldly outlines a new mythology and its deities, depicting the pantheon and geography of a land called Pegana in decorated, ornate prose.

The style is utterly and deliberately artificial, and readers either take immediately to its musicality and languorous phrasings or find it all slightly absurd. I love this orotund Dunsany for a page or two, then tire of the twee, fin-de-siècle biblicality: "There arises a river in Pegana that is neither a river of water nor yet a river of fire, and it flows through the skies and the Worlds to the Rim of the Worlds—a river of silence. Through all the Worlds are sounds, the noises of moving, and the echoes of voices and song; but upon the River is no sound ever heard, for there all echoes die." Beautiful and atmospheric, yes; but a little goes a long way.

Dunsany eventually turned away from descriptions of the gods' realm to chronicle "little adventures at the edge of the world," many of them tales of swords and sorcery or marvels out of *The Arabian Nights*. The tone of *The Book of Wonder* (1912), for instance, is drier and more ironic—as in "The Hoard of the Gibbelins," a story that opens: "The Gibbelins eat, as is well known, nothing less good than man."

Indeed, few writers can better tantalize a reader's imagination with an enigmatic lead sentence. Try: "When the nomads came to El Lola they had no more songs, and the question of stealing the golden box arose in all its magnitude." That's from "Probable Adventure of the Three Literary Men," and who wouldn't want to hear more? Like many others, this story is even further enhanced—at least in its original printing—by the unsettling artwork of the author's regular illustrator, S.H. Sime.

But Dunsany also composed another kind of fantastic tale, slightly more hard-edged, with twists worthy of O. Henry. Consider "Two Bottles of Relish," which explains the grotesque reason a man who has murdered a young woman should chop down all the trees in his yard. More often than not, these later works strongly suggest a storyteller entertaining a company of listeners. His classic chess story, "The Three Sailors' Gambit," starts this way: "Sitting some years ago in the ancient tavern at Over, one afternoon in spring, I was waiting as was my custom for something strange to happen." Another, "The Three Infernal Jokes," begins: "This is the story that the desolate man told me on the lonely Highland road one autumn evening with winter coming on and the stags roaring."

In such tales the voice of the narrator and the frame—a tavern, a sitting room before a hearth, a library—are surprisingly important, for they create, however factitiously, the sense that these are true memories, personal anecdotes, fragments that we might have heard ourselves, had we been there.

Dunsany worked in this form most unforgettably in the reminiscences of Mr. Joseph Jorkens. Related as he sits by the fire in the Billiards Club, Jorkens's anecdotes are tall tales: adventures with unicorns and mermaids and ancient curses, accounts of giant diamonds, Martian exploration, and trees that walk.

All of them are conveyed with a wistful air, in a perfectly serious tone. There's no way to prove them or disprove them. But when the night is chill and the fire burns low . . . "The talk had veered round to runes and curses and witches, one bleak December evening, where a few of us sat warm in easy chairs round the cheery fire of the Billiards Club. 'Do you believe in witches?' one of us said to Jorkens. 'It isn't what I believe in that matters so much,' said Jorkens; 'only what I have seen.'" And off we go.

Dunsany published five compilations of these addictive stories, starting with *The Travel Tales of Mr. Joseph Jorkens* (1931) and *Jorkens Remembers Africa* (1934). These two make up the first volume (of an intended three) of *The Collected Jorkens*, a new reprinting edited by our leading Dunsany scholar, S.T. Joshi. They should not be missed by anyone who cares for marvels and mysteries, for tales of strange seas and shores.

Indeed, this edition has been long awaited, as the original volumes are scarce, and some exchange hands for several hundred dollars in the used-book market, when they can be found at all. I own the first two collections, as well as the relatively common *Fourth Book of Jorkens* (1948), but in a lifetime of visiting used-book stores, I've never seen *Jorkens Has a Large Whiskey* (1940) and *Jorkens Borrows Another Whiskey* (1954), which will presumably make up the next installment from Nightshade Press (due out sometime this year). The third volume will include stories never published in Dunsany's lifetime, making a total beyond the 127 already known.

According to their presenter—ostensibly Dunsany himself—Jorkens's reminiscences have been given to the public "so that men and women to whom the Billiards Club means nothing may come by scraps of knowledge of far corners of Earth, or tittle tattle about odd customs of some of its queer folk, which would otherwise be lost with the anecdotes that were only told to help pass a dingy afternoon or to recompense a friend for the trifling favor of a large whiskey and soda."

Now aged, fat, and always in need of a fresh drink, Jorkens looks back on his early years with a nostalgia born from the knowledge that, in Wordsworth's phrase, "there hath passed away a glory from the earth." Once upon a time, the world was commensurate with our dreams. But no more. "Those were beautiful times," laments Jorkens, "and we've spoiled them; we've spoiled them with too much noise and too much hurry; we've let machinery loose on them. . . . Those were quiet and happy days; a little of them remains in the corners of old gardens, where they look as though they were hiding; but not much."

In the past, or at least in Jorkens's past, you could travel to Africa, or Russia, or any of the distant parts of the empire, and naturally expect to encounter the unusual. The world was a realm of marvels. Once, for instance, Jorkens found himself surrounded by

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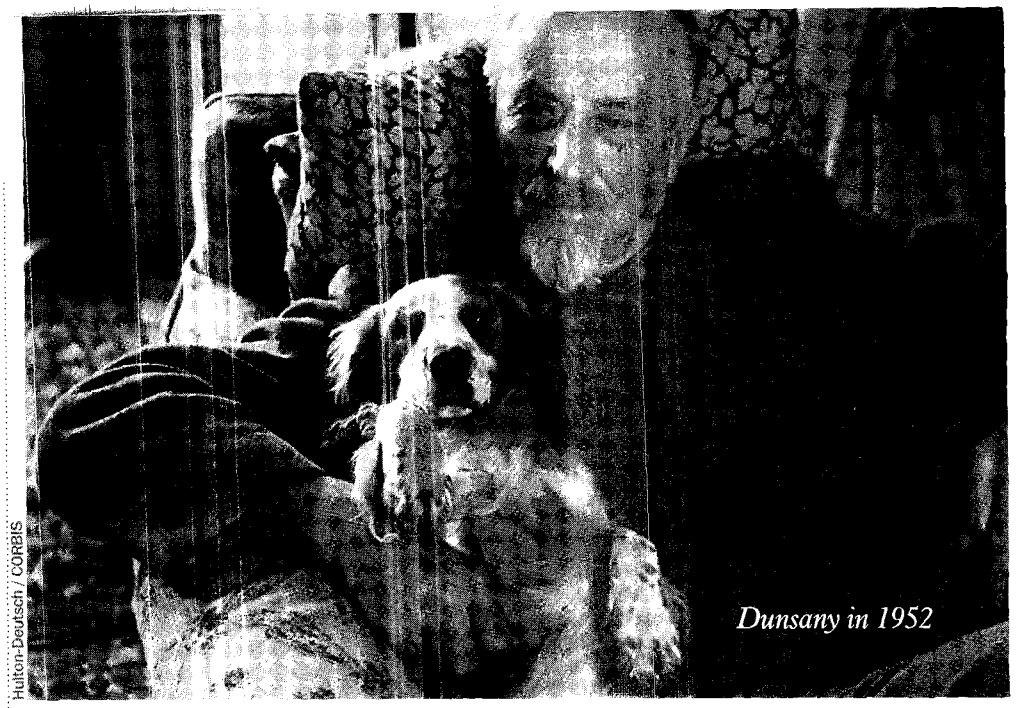
African warriors who dressed—well, let him tell it: "'Eighty-five men with spears, of a tribe that I did not know, and every one of them in evening dress. . . . White ties, white waistcoats,' said Jorkens quietly. 'In fact just what you are wearing now, except that they had rather heavier watch-chains, and they all wore diamond solitaires.'"

After allowing this image to take hold for a moment, the storyteller quickly adds: "'And the first thing I thought was that I need hardly expect the worst, because however nasty the spears looked, anything like cannibalism was impossible in decent evening dress, such as they were all wearing. I was wrong there.'"



Hulton-Deutsch / CORBIS

Dunsany in 1952

That last sentence reveals the typical Dunsany touch. He begins with an absurd, impossible situation, builds it up, and then suddenly caps everything with another and greater absurdity, yet one that proves, somehow, almost logical. Try as you may, you never quite guess what the final twist will be.

In one story a man visits a witch; she offers him a charm against thirst and a charm against drowning, and he buys the first because he plans to travel in the desert. It works, sort of—yet after weeks without rain, amid the dry sand and under the burning African sun, the poor bloke actually ends up drowned. "Drowned," said Jorkens. "He could have had a charm against drowning, for the same price, but one never knows what is in store." Still, another time, a young man falls in love with a strangely haughty and seductive woman on a Greek island, and Jorkens leads us to believe that she must be Circe. But at the last moment, we learn that she was, in fact, "a Mrs. Harbett that had lived a pretty fast life in London." Jorkens innocently adds: "You see. . . . one never knows."

The question of truthfulness recurs at the opening of nearly every tale; it becomes a leitmotif, an extra barrier that the genial raconteur has to work around. When Dunsany is first introduced to the Billiards Club, he is cautioned never to believe anything Jorkens says. Later, Jorkens berates Dunsany, now his chronicler, by informing him that some people have begun likening his adventures to those of Baron Munchausen—just because a story or two is "distinctly out of the way." But so what? "I imagine you will not disbelieve it on that account. Otherwise everyone that ever told a story of any experience he'd had would have to select the dullest and most ordinary, so as to be believed: an account of a railway journey, we'll say, from Penge to Victoria station. We've not come to that, I trust."

In fact, the recurrent skepticism about Jorkens's veracity keeps alive the notion that just maybe his anecdotes could be true. When inherently impossible matters are treated as though they were only unlikely or questionable, this grants them a distant plausibility. Perhaps these tales don't really disrupt the order of things, but rather confirm our deepest dreams. And on this uncertainty Jorkens builds. He does so at the least provocation; just give him an opening. Saki ends a story, "The Open Window," by saying of a character that "romance at short notice was her specialty." So is it with Jorkens.

On the surface, Jorkens—like an Anglo-Saxon bard—recounts his past experiences in return for a glass of refreshment. Much is made of his taste for whiskey, and he even constructs one far-fetched tale about smuggling moonshine during Prohibition. It contains this priceless sentence: "The sun so late in the year was shining quite warmly through the glittering leaves, adding to the pangs of my thirst, and I was getting near the point when men drink water."

Such low-keyed humor pervades the Jorkens stories, as in "The Showman" or "One August in the Red Sea." But the very best tales blend humor and narrative legerdemain with something more: horror in "The Walk to Lingham," mystery in "Ozymandias," science in "Our Distant Cousins," and, most often of all, lost romance, especially in "A Mystery of the East" and "Mrs. Jorkens." In such stories, any adult can feel the allure of past enchantment—for all of us have experienced broken hearts and missed chances: "Then all the loneliness came back to me, all the bleak emptiness there in the world when mystery has left it, and all the aching of my heart for magic, or whatever it is that puts a wonder upon whatever it touches, and cannot itself be described."

Jorkens blames the modern era, modern science, above all modern machinery for leaching the wondrous from travel and life. In "Mrs. Jorkens" he recalls how he met, courted, and wed a mermaid who ultimately left him for the sea. He portrays himself as a down-to-earth, even unimaginative Englishman—he calls his fabulous beloved "Gladys"—who somehow just happens to discover poetry and magic amid the seemingly mundane. Yet when he recalls those encounters, the

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skeptical cross-examine with hard questions or mumble about prevarication. Still, do we truly prefer the drearily factual to the marvelous? "You see a woman may hold a fan for a moment in front of her face, and have a young man almost paralyzed with the mystery of what expression she is wearing behind it. She may awe them with the turn of an ankle, or the poise of her head." Ah, romance! But, as Jorkens sadly adds, "she can't do that to a man that has known a mermaid."

Perhaps not. But the world, to its loss, no longer believes in mermaids. "I was miles from guessing all that idly bought ticket [to see Gladys] would mean to me. It is like that with the past; it is all gone now; gone forever with all its vastness, all its tremendous import; but it is made out of little trifles like that one-rupee ticket bought in an hour to spare, ashore at Aden. All gone now. . . . Oh, the green of those seas, and oh those sunsets and the blaze of the afterglow. I'm sure they don't shine like that now. I never hear anyone talking of it, of the thousands that pass by Aden. I know they are all gone, all those colors and lights. And nothing remains but this dark, dripping evening."

Many of these wonder tales conclude on just this note, with the aging storyteller sitting quietly alone before his whiskey, staring silently into the fire, unable to shake off the wonder of the past and full of regret for what is so unaccountably gone. And so Dunsany's readers, who themselves remember the ache and allure of other days, slowly come to identify with Jorkens and to feel, if only for a moment, that same sorrow for how much Time takes away. *Sunt lacrimae rerum.*

But then we turn the page and are off yet again: "I said to Jorkens, as I had once said before, 'What is the strangest thing you have ever seen?' And, as it happened, Jorkens remembered that I had previously asked the same question. 'I've told you,' said Jorkens. 'Yes, yes,' I said, 'the daughter of Rameses. I suppose that was the strangest thing that anyone could have seen.'" 'Oh, I wouldn't say that,' answered Jorkens." ♦

Asian Blues

Why the problem of China will not go away.

BY ELLEN BORK

After September 11, President Bush overturned decades of policy toward the Middle East, regretting long-support for dictators and acknowledging the link between democratic governance, stable and humane rule of citizens, and international security. China policy, however, has been left untouched. In fact, the president, who came to office seeking to restore a balance in the relationship with Beijing, reportedly told his staff he did not want a China "inbox."

All this leaves unanswered an important question: What about the dictatorial and undemocratic government in China? The failure to make China's governance an issue in American policy is not new. For decades, the driving idea has been that economic engagement now will lead to inevitable political change later. When America was swept up in the dot-com boom, the power of the Internet was grafted onto this economics-drives-politics argument: Technology is the handmaiden of wealth, zapping information outside the regime's control to wired citizens. Bill Clinton ridiculed the idea of a regime controlling the Internet, painting a comical picture of hapless Chinese cadres trying to "nail Jell-O to the wall" as they attempted to stop the flow of free information.

But, in fact, economic growth has not brought democracy or improved human rights. Just this year, the State Department cited China's "backsliding" and "deterioration." Nor has the Internet put the dictatorship in a stranglehold. Special security forces help the regime shut down Internet cafés, block sites, trace traffic, and imprison Internet essayists. The Falun Gong's clever use of communications—beepers, mobile phones, email—has not enabled it to avoid a brutal campaign of repression. Hundreds have reportedly died in custody and thousands more are incarcerated in prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric hospitals.

Losing the New China
A Story of American Commerce, Desire and Betrayal
by Ethan Gutmann
Encounter, 253 pp., $25.95

China's Democratic Future
How It Will Happen and Where It Will Lead
by Bruce Gilley
Columbia Univ. Press, 297 pp., $29.50

Wild Grass
Three Stories of Change in Modern China
by Ian Johnson
Pantheon, 324 pp., $24

Still, the notion that trade will bring about democracy remains irresistible. And it is not surprising that American businesses and their trade associations and lobbyists have taken on a leading role in shaping policy on China. That distorted role of America's business engagement with China is the heart of Ethan Gutmann's new book, *Losing the New China*, an account of his three years in the Far East.

Meanwhile on Capitol Hill, high-tech businesses were claiming that trade and investment would unleash rights and liberties. Gutmann reports how companies jockeyed for contracts to help Beijing police its citizens. Cisco Systems, for example, significantly discounted for the Chinese government the technology to censor the Internet. At a trade show aimed at selling products to China's security apparatus, Gutmann finds products for sale that violate the United States' ban on exporting to

Ellen Bork is a deputy director for The Project for the New American Century.

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China "any crime control or detection instruments or equipment." As for any moral qualms, one systems engineer in Beijing said, as Guttmann reported in THE WEEKLY STANDARD two years ago, that how China used Cisco's products was "none of Cisco's business."

It's a short jump from turning a blind eye to believing your own press. When Gutmann proposes an idealistic plan to create a model factory, with health care and safety standards to an American in the garment business, so as to "add value" to the business's reputation, a businessman replies, "We are not a manufacturer in China; we are a retailer." Gutmann gets it right away: "What company wants to say openly that they are in China for the export platform—a very successful export platform consisting of well-controlled, incredibly hardworking labor that costs next to nothing?"

Gutmann's tour of Beijing includes another kind of depravity as well—the sexcapades of some expatriates, like "Rex," the business consultant, who, if he weren't living and working in Beijing, would be known as a sex tourist, and "Jack" who pimps for visiting clients. In Gutmann's telling, the lifestyles of some expatriate businessmen seem to provide their justification for maintaining the myth of profitability in the Chinese market.

But that's not all. American businessmen are often pressured to lobby not just for China's admission to the World Trade Organization, where it arguably has a legitimate interest, but also against American support for Taiwan and against export controls on dual-use items that enhance China's military capabilities.

Few targets of such Chinese pressure feel inclined to go public about them, fearing retaliation from China or their companies. But they are sensitive to the charge. At a 1997 dinner I attended, a shocked hush fell over a room of hundreds of businessmen when a congressional staffer stood up and suggested American businessmen advocating China's positions on Capitol Hill should file under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

Landov

[illegible] police confiscating computers in an illegal Internet café this year.

[illegible] also uses the American business community to reinforce nationalism as a grievance against the United States. After the 1999 NATO bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, a delegation of American businessmen visiting Washington for the annual "door knock" on Capitol Hill found themselves part of Beijing's political theater. A camera shot of them bowing their heads in prayer at a breakfast meeting at the Chinese embassy in Washington was portrayed on Chinese television as an act of humble contrition. Meanwhile, visiting congressmen and their staff were encouraged to feel that expressing sympathy with China's view "would enhance their viability by playing to their host's sensitivities."

Somehow, running alongside the belief that economic growth leads inevitably to democracy, there has emerged a view that nationalism is an immutable part of the Chinese character. These and other assumptions come in for examination in Bruce Gilley's *China's Democratic Future: How It Will Happen and Where It Will Lead*. Gilley argues that "mainstream, as opposed to official nationalism may be one of the most potent democratic forces." In fact, Gilley argues that Chinese sensitivity to injuries to their national dignity is often bound up with their rejection of the Communist party—as, for instance, in the regime's effort to control the NATO bombing protests.

This is just one of the departures Gilley, a China journalist turned academic, takes from the conventional approach by "policy specialists who imagine the PRC as a representative government whose policies reflect an essentialized 'Chinese world view.'" Gilley rejects an American foreign policy dominated by "experts soaked in Sinology who argue for a soft face-giving approach [and] often forget that they represent democracies that demand accountability." Instead, he urges that Washington remedy the failure of past administrations to pursue an end to Communist party rule, by making concerted efforts to help reformers, and denying the unreformed leadership political capital, including high level summits.

Gilley provides a devastating critique of the failures of the Communist party. His indictment, however, is inconsistent in ways that undermine his ambitious argument about how China will democratize. Gilley is quite clear on the point that the party will not succeed with halfway steps at reform such as allowing participation by non-party individuals. "The problem is the same as those of trying to make the party representative: The goals and power of the party are non-negotiable, and thus outside help can do no more than make the party slightly less dysfunctional and appear slightly more democratic." The legal system too is "a tool of party dictatorship more than a restraint on it." (Oddly, Gilley shows little skepticism about village elections, another of the party's efforts to dress up its control with the trappings of democracy.)

This assessment is difficult to square with Gilley's overarching thesis for the

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end of the Communist dictatorship. His scenario goes something like this: The failure of the party to reform itself, reinforced by a hardened attitude on reform since Tiananmen, will, in combination with a future crisis of some kind, unleash popular unrest and mobilization. The regime will be unsuccessful in attempts to save itself. At the crucial moment, neither hardliners nor security forces will order a crackdown. In the end, certain "heroes of retreat" (a term borrowed from a German political scientist) will "extricate" the party from power, clearing the way for a democratic state.

Much in this scenario remains unclear and even contradictory. According to Gilley, the regime will be in steep decline but remain "powerful enough to force the revolutionary change to take place on the inside rather than the outside." Gilley supports his claim that there will be no violent suppression of public unrest with "little noticed pro-reform faction inside the coercive apparatus," internal party teachings against violence, and a revulsion to the ongoing Falun Gong crackdown. Yet at Tiananmen, the leadership was able to bring in forces untainted by such views, or even knowledge of what was taking place, to do the job. And known reformers acquiesced.

Gilley knows a lot about the conservatives, moderates, and democrats he says will determine the outcome of a future regime crisis. He wrote a biography of Jiang Zemin and was coauthor with Andrew Nathan of *The Secret Files*, an account of internal party documents, describing top leaders, leaked in 2001. But he does not provide much meat on the bones of his current claims. Gilley is firm on the need for international pressure, if a little too confident that the international community will actually step up to the plate. Why would other reformers be more likely now to move decisively in a crisis than they were in 1989? Gilley does not give equal time to the regime's efforts to erect a system of control that provides better governance in matters like the environment and health, while remaining uncompromising on politics.

Economic growth doesn't play a significant role in Gilley's scenario—except as a negative factor driving the people to despair. What does become clear in these books is that China possesses the foundations for democracy now. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that continued economic engagement without external pressure is delaying reform and strengthening the repressive apparatus of the state.

If Gilley is consumed with the idea of elite-led change, Ian Johnson concerns himself with the lives and struggles of ordinary people in *Wild Grass: Three Stories of Change in Modern China*. Johnson, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter who won a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the Falun Gong, describes an unstable situation brought about by a regime that leads ordinary citizens to climb out on limbs the party has allowed to sprout—and then saws off with tragic consequences.

Johnson's heroes are remarkable. Each responded to an injustice or act of inhumanity by arbitrary or corrupt governance. Ma Wenlin, a former teacher, felt obligated to help peasants shake off their crushing tax burdens. Fang Ke, an architecture student, dreamed of monumental projects until overcome by his mentor's mission to preserve Beijing's courtyard homes and alleys. Zhang Xueling, the daughter of a Falun Gong follower beaten to death in police custody, sought official acknowledgment in the form of a death certificate for her mother. They try to find their way, literally, within the system. (She needed help just to find the government's petition and appeals office, whose location is a secret.)

Their lives illustrate the chasm between the government and the people—the one that Gilley rightly noted goes unappreciated by so many policymakers. Despite the greater latitude in contemporary Chinese life, ultimately, they cannot help crossing the Communist party. The government's corruption, mismanagement, and brutality cannot be blamed for the unrest it has created. And so Ma is in jail, and Zhang, protected for a time by publicity from reporting like Johnson's, eventually served time in an extrajudicial administrative detention as well.

Ian Johnson's book is much less ambitious than Gilley's, but in its own way it is just as uncompromising in predicting that change in China will come from these ordinary people. One of his heroes, a lawyer named Feng who defended Ma, provides the best assessment of when that might be. "The current system is at a dead end, but its death is not in sight." ♦

Let's Not Do It

As a film version of Cole Porter's life, De-Lovely *is less than delightful.* **BY JOHN PODHORETZ**

Hollywood loves homosexuality without reservation—but within reason. Indeed, in movies and on television all portraits of male homosexuality are buffed to a sentimental glow, just so long as certain rules are followed. For example, it's fine for an obviously gay performer to play an openly gay character—if that gay character is a delightful supporting player whose purpose is to serve as foil and sounding-board.

He can be the best friend, the infinitely understanding next-door neighbor, the wacky relative. He cannot be the lead. We're not supposed to identify with him. We're supposed to enjoy his company, to be amused by

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him, and deal with him only in small doses. Oh, we might see him bicker lovingly with his hunky new boyfriend, but the camera won't follow him into a gay bar or a bathhouse or the bedroom. Though the wacky neighbor type makes a lot of jokes about sex, he is fundamentally sexless.

The situation is different if the central figure is gay. Here we are allowed to see him kiss a boyfriend for a moment, even to wake up beside a man. But the embrace is never passionate, and when the two men rise from bed and dress, they will tend to converse in tones more appropriate to clubsmen talking about the afternoon's golf game.

It also seems necessary for the actor who plays the gay character to be well known for living a real-life conventional heterosexual existence. Tom Hanks, who has one of America's most famously contented marriages, to the actress Rita Wilson, won an Oscar playing an AIDS sufferer in *Philadelphia*. His partner in that film was Antonio Banderas, who was the object of Madonna's lust in the documentary *Truth or Dare* and who now cavorts happily before the paparazzi with his second wife, the babe-alicious Melanie Griffith. In HBO's mammoth film version of *Angels in America*, Al Pacino—recently embroiled in a vicious custody battle with yet another onetime sexpot actress, Beverly D'Angelo—played AIDS-tormented McCarthyite power broker Roy Cohn.

It's clear that Hollywood's idea of the perfect gay man is Kevin Kline, who is now starring in his second film as a homosexual. (Kline has been married for fifteen years to Phoebe Cates, who was realistically portrayed as the object of every teenage boy's fantasy twenty years ago in *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*.) Kline's first gay role was in *In & Out* from 1997, in which he played a high-school teacher who realizes the truth about himself on the day of his wedding. Now, in *De-Lovely*, Kline takes on the role of witty *bon vivant* Cole Porter, the Broadway genius who wrote dozens and dozens of great songs over the course of a forty-year career in New York and Hollywood.

MGM

Kevin Kline and Ashley Judd as Cole and Linda Porter in De-Lovely.

The classically trained Kline speaks with crisp precision and has the ramrod posture of a Prussian military officer. He is occasionally guilty of actorly excess, but not when he's playing a homosexual. Indeed, the only occasions on which Kline has ever underacted are his two gay roles. Kline is Hollywood's go-to gay guy, because there's a way in which he seems gay without setting off anybody's gaydar. And that's part of the problem with *De-Lovely*. Kline is playing someone who was as blatantly gay as any closeted man in the decades before the gay-rights movement could have been. It's as though Kline had been hired to play the Lubavitcher rebbe—but told not to grow a beard and sidelocks.

De-Lovely is a very strange film that can't decide what it wants to be. Its failure is due in part to the extreme discomfort director Irwin Winkler and screenwriter Jay Cocks show towards Porter's sexual hijinks and the role they played in his life. At times *De-Lovely* tries to turn Cole Porter's life into a Cole Porter musical, with one scene set in glittering Paris salons at which tuxedoed and evening-gowned Parisians burst into Porter's amazing "Well, Did You Evah? (What a Swell Party This Is)." In another, Porter himself lets loose with an all-singing, all-dancing proposal to his soon-to-be-wife Linda in the Tuileries to the tune of "Easy to Love."

At other points *De-Lovely* becomes a version of Bob Fosse's *All That Jazz*, featuring an aged Porter sitting in an empty theater with a supernatural being who is directing a fantasy stage-show version of Porter's life. And what a peculiar and remarkable life it was. Like Irving Berlin, Porter was one of the few Broadway songwriters to compose both music and lyrics, and he was astonishingly gifted at both. His tunes were as rich and unusually memorable as his lyrics were effervescent and witty. The movie's one brilliant touch is that it has such present-day pop stars as Elvis Costello and Alanis Morrissette performing Porter numbers in period costume. Costello appears as a society bandleader singing "Let's Misbehave," while Morrissette is a Broadway actress who introduces Porter's first great hit, "Let's Do It (Let's Fall in Love)."

Porter was singular in other ways as well. Every other great Broadway songwriter was a Jewish boy who was either born in New York or immigrated there as a child. Porter was a rich kid from the Hoosier sticks. J.O. Cole had been the wealthiest man in Peru, Indiana, and deeply disapproved of the songwriting foolishness that consumed his namesake.

As a Yale undergraduate, Porter wrote two school fight songs that are still warbled today. A few years later, at Harvard Law School, he roomed with

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future secretary of state Dean Acheson. At the age of twenty-five, in 1916, he wrote his first Broadway show, a huge flop called *See America First*. Distressed by its failure, he moved to Paris—and enlisted in the French Foreign Legion to fight for his country's cause when America entered World War I.

None of this is in the movie. Instead, *De-Lovely* begins with Porter in Paris after the war. The once-legendary literary portraitist Michael Arlen wrote in 1919 about Porter's glittering life there: "Every morning at half past seven, Cole Porter leaps lightly out of bed and, having said his prayers, arranges himself in a riding habit. Then, having written a song or two, he will appear at the stroke of half-past twelve at the Ritz, where leaning in a manly way on the bar he will say 'Champagne cocktail, please. Had a marvelous ride this morning!'"

Just at this time, he met and married an aristocratic divorcée, eight years his senior, named Linda Lee Thomas. Cole and Linda remained married for thirty-four years, until her death in 1954. During that time, he actively and without guilt pursued the company of men. This unusual marriage is the true subject of *De-Lovely*, and the choice to center the movie around the Cole-Linda relationship was a terrible mistake. Director Irwin Winkler and screenwriter Jay Cocks simply don't know what to make of it.

It's their theory that Linda was accepting of Cole, who treated her with kindness and loved her as much as he was able to love any woman. Linda was his Muse, even though in their depiction of her she wants much more from him. The Linda of *De-Lovely* loves Cole deeply, craves his touch sexually, but understands that his urges lead him elsewhere. She complains when he behaves indiscreetly with men, but the moviemakers want us to understand she's really complaining mostly because she loves him so. The movie shows two scenes of Cole and Linda making love and even invents a fictional and conveniently doomed pregnancy for Linda.

This is all nonsense. According to Porter's biographer, William McBrien, Linda may herself have been a lesbian. Certainly many of her contemporaries thought so. There were other theories about her as well. One of her relatives speculated that she had been so violently abused, both physically and sexually, during her first marriage that she grew repulsed by physical contact of any kind. There is no reason to believe Cole and Linda ever touched each other in a sexual way.

Porter was a classic mama's boy—the apple of his mother Kate's eye. Everybody who knew them believed that Linda's relationship with Cole was largely maternal. *De-Lovely* makes a total hash out of this key aspect of their relationship. Kevin Kline is fifty-seven years old. Ashley Judd, who plays Linda, is thirty-six. Now, Kline is a very young fifty-six, and Judd a mature thirty-six, but there's no question he's very much her senior. If anything, he's more paternal toward her than she is maternal toward him. And that makes their connection even more mysterious.

But it really wasn't mysterious at all. The Porters had a successful marriage of convenience. They enjoyed each other's company, were useful to each other, and were able to live the high life while paying necessary dues to social convention. Such was the well-functioning life of the closeted homosexual, especially for someone like Porter who had a special taste for rent boys.

Winkler and Cocks clearly do not want us to judge Porter's behavior, lest their film seem homophobic. As a result, the scenes involving Porter's gay behavior are incomprehensible. The filmmakers don't want us to think that Porter was compulsive, even though he clearly was. They dutifully portray Porter's homosexual life but make it lifeless, so that it's hard to understand why he would be spending time with these well-dressed men when he has that lovely wife at home slinking around in a silk nightgown.

The truth is that Porter was a man consumed by hungers—for experience, for sex, for fame, for social standing, for money, for that "yearning, burning inside of me," as he described it in "Night and Day." That insatiable quality is nowhere present in this dainty movie. Porter's life was anything but dainty—even though much of it was spent in very high-flown and expensive quarters.

It's well known that Porter wrote some of the dirtiest songs ever to slip by the censors, with double entendres that can still make you blush when you think about them (there are dozens of verses of "Let's Do It," many of them nearly pornographic, and Winston Churchill knew them all). What's less frequently noted is his dark, sadomasochistic streak, as in "So in Love" from *Kiss Me Kate*: "So taunt me, and hurt me, deceive me, desert me, I'm yours till I die."

Astonishingly, Winkler and Cocks attempt to turn "So in Love" into the romantic high point of the movie, with Cole telling an ailing Linda that he wrote it just for her. Watching Linda die is just one of the many depressing aspects of the final hour of *De-Lovely*, which also features Cole's crippling horse-riding accident that left him in excruciating pain for decades—and a long look at the depression that consumed Porter in the last years of his life.

The movie takes a perverse pleasure in denying us pleasure. Nowhere is this clearer than in the odd way Kline assays eight of Porter's greatest songs. Kline performs them not in the strong Broadway baritone that helped him win two Tony awards for his work in musicals, but rather in a high-pitched and breathy voice that more closely approximates Porter's own. According to the production notes, Kline actually had to learn how not to sing well. Now, why on earth would you deny the audience of a movie musical the pleasure of hearing great songs sung beautifully?

And why on earth would anyone choose to make a movie about an immensely charming, immensely talented, immensely amusing songwriter—and turn his life into a tiresome chore? ♦

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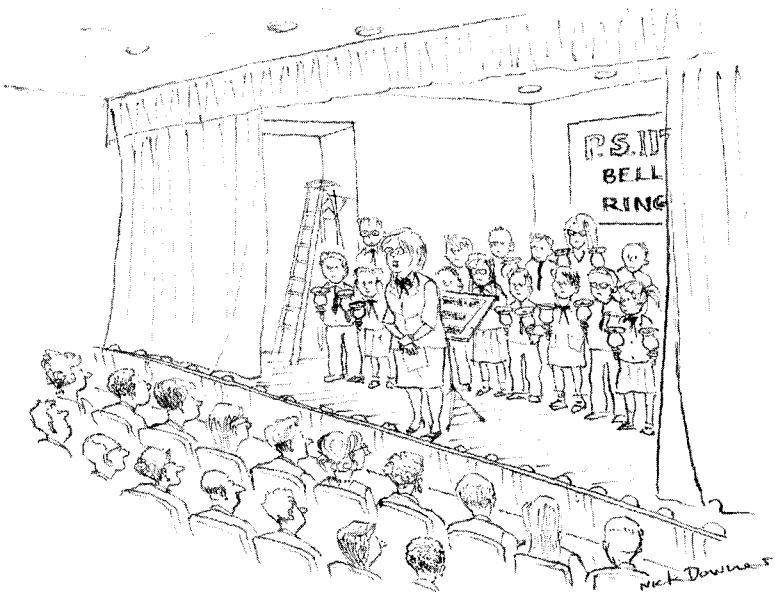

"We'd like to end our recital this evening with a final death-knell for Western civilization."

Books in Brief

Running on Empty: How the Democratic and Republican Parties Are Bankrupting Our Future and What Americans Can Do About It **by Peter G. Peterson (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 233 pp., $24).** The nation's economic Cassandra, Peter Peterson, has now produced *Running on Empty*, which builds upon previous demographic doomsday scenarios. Commerce secretary under Nixon and now chairman of the Blackstone Group, Peterson contends that western welfare states' aging populations and swelling budget deficits threaten to bankrupt pension and health care systems. Peterson's accusation that we risk looting our children's future rings true; every day many of the 76 million baby boomers are taking early retirements.

An expensive new war on terrorism, congressional gridlock, and polarized political orthodoxies further darken this grim gray dawn. Peterson warns GOP hard-liners that if they intend to starve the welfare state to the point of economic cataclysm, they'd best remember that massive societal crises always favor big-government messiahs.

Peterson proposes indexing Social Security payments to prices, not wages, and mandating personal retirement savings accounts. For Medicare, he prescribes the same combination of personal choice and managed competition currently offered federal government employees—along with annual spending caps and malpractice limits. He wants overhauls of the federal budget process, and an end to "safe seat" gerrymandering of congressional districts and escalating campaign expenditures. Peterson yearns for renewed commitment to civic duty, responsibility, and the future. But the future belongs to those with children. Peterson recognizes that rising affluence and changing sex roles fuel the birth dearth; but he has no remedy for the rising childlessness of Western nations. And that's the deeper problem.

—Frederick R. Lynch

So You Wanna Be a Rock & Roll Star **by Jacob Slichter (Broadway, 286 pp., $21.95).** The pop music industry is bizarre in its business practices, generally sucky in its product, and altogether hard for an outsider to understand. Its celebrities include people like Jennifer Lopez whose music no discerning audience has ever celebrated. The radio stations would sooner keep years-old, played-out dreck in heavy rotation than let a single off-beat number past their gates. And then there are the massive record companies, whose manners are said to make Hollywood look genteel.

Fortunately for those curious about what the business is like, there is now Jacob Slichter's *So You Wanna Be a Rock & Roll Star.* Slichter is the drummer for the Minneapolis band Semisonic, whose second album, *Feeling Strangely Fine*, was a multiplatinum hit on the strength of its number-one single, "Closing Time," which, six years after its release, can still be heard in many bars around the time of last call.

From punk bands with their do-it-yourself ethic to singer-songwriters like Ani DiFranco and Aimee Mann who have gone so far as to start their own record labels, the argument that music must be saved from the ravages of corporate America has gotten a full airing. For his part, Slichter doesn't complain much about the lap of corporate luxury, only studio politics when they result in picking the wrong track for a single. Most impressively, the drummer shows a light touch with vignettes involving the radio programmers who boycott a single if a band refuses to play its festival or if a competing station has started to play the song. But none of these tyrants bests the studio executive who requires recordings be approved by his teenage son.

With a refreshingly untortured conscience, Slichter describes the waves of money splashing around to promote singles through the lobbying of radio stations and the making of videos. These expenditures are tallied as debt, along with recording and touring costs, which the band repays with record sales. Or the band doesn't repay because of bad sales—and is then dropped, as MCA unceremoniously dumped Semisonic after its third album sold less well than expected.

—David Skinner

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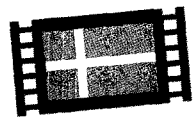
Parody

"Everything in my books and movies and TV shows is true."
—Michael Moore

Moore "hired outside fact-checkers, led by a former general counsel of The New Yorker and a veteran member of that magazine's legendary fact-checking team, to vet the film. . . . Mr. Moore hints that the real reason Mr. Bush invaded Afghanistan was to give his cronies a chance to profit by building an oil pipeline there. 'I'm just raising what I think is a legitimate question,' [Moore said], adding, 'I'm just posing a question.'" **—New York Times, June 20**



DANISH MØDERN FILMS
c o p e n h a g e n

DATE: July 4, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE

DANISH FILMMAKER MIKKEL MØR BEGINS WORK ON CELSIUS 488

Copenhagen, Denmark—Mikkel Mør, the noted Danish filmmaker, has launched a new documentary film project entitled *Celsius 488*, exposing Denmark's machinations to control the world.

"Every assertion in this film is *undeniable fact*," says Mør. "The point is to pose some legitimate questions." Among the film's highlights:

1. George Herbert Walker Bush: Denmark's Lapdog?
Fact: In 1990, Denmark condemns Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
Fact: In 1991, George Herbert Walker Bush's coalition expels Iraqi troops from Kuwait, *satisfying Denmark's wish* for an Iraqi withdrawal.
Fact: After leaving office, President Bush provides counsel to the Carlyle Group.
Fact: In May 2004, the Carlyle Group announces that it intends to invest $160 million in real estate—in Copenhagen, *capital of Denmark*.

2. Australia: A Marionette on Danish Strings?
Fact: In 2003, Denmark joins the coalition to topple Saddam.
Fact: In 2003, Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark requests that an *Australian* named Mary Donaldson marry him. The Australian embassy lodges no protest and Donaldson complies.
Fact: In 2003, Australia joins the *same coalition* to topple Saddam.
Fact: In June 2004, apart from the United States, the first two countries to officially present ambassadors to Iraq are *Australia* and *Denmark*.

3. David Bowie: Health Trouble—Caused Covertly by Denmark? In Revenge?
Fact: In March 2003, pop star David Bowie contributes a track to *The War Child Hope Album*, the profits from which will go to aiding Iraqi children. Numerous artists opposed to the war contribute tracks.
Fact: In June 2004, the Roskilde Festival, which takes place in Denmark, which *supported* the war, announces that David Bowie's appearance *has been cancelled*. David Bowie's website states vaguely that the cancellation is "due to David's continued condition."

4. Jerry Falwell and the Religious Right in America: Planets Around a Danish Sun?
Fact: In 2004, the film *The Passion of the Christ* is released. Jerry Falwell says he prays the film will "have a powerful impact on our culture," and many *conservative* Christian leaders agree.
Fact: The director of that film, Mel Gibson, is the *same person* who starred in *The Patriot*, which featured a young actor named Heath Ledger.
Fact: In 1999, Ledger appeared in a movie with actress Julia Stiles.
Fact: In 2004, Julia Stiles appeared in a movie called *The Prince & Me* about a girl who marries a prince—from *Denmark*.

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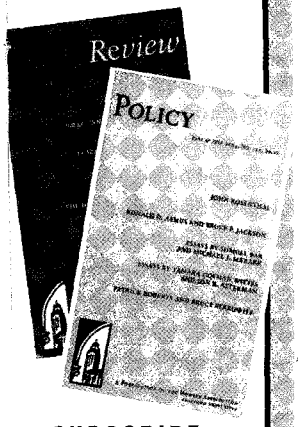
Cutting-Edge Commentary on Public Policy

POLICY REVIEW



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In the new issue of *Policy Review*

The Future of Ground Zero

Architect Daniel Libeskind's perverse vision.

It is, then, long overdue that New Yorkers and Americans generally come to know something about the sources of [Daniel] Libeskind's prestige in the country that made him famous. Along the way, we will also learn more about the "philosophy" ostensibly underlying his architecture. As we will see, the mystical or metaphysical bent that is so much celebrated by Libeskind's admirers and that recently has had him seeking some occult significance in shapes and numbers and angles in lower Manhattan also had him perceiving a cosmic significance in the 9/11 attacks themselves. In fact, the meaning that the "master planner" of the new World Trade Center finds in the destruction of the old is seemingly no different from the meaning that virtually all apologists for the attacks claim to have found therein.

—John Rosenthal

The Black Sea and the Frontiers of Freedom

The challenge of projecting stability into the Greater Middle East will be much aided by a stable Black Sea region.

Put simply, the interface between the Euro-Atlantic community and the Greater Middle East runs across the Black Sea, the new Fulda Gap. The generational challenge of projecting stability into the Greater Middle East will be much aided by a stable and successfully anchored wider Black Sea region. This is not just a matter of geography, territory, or Western access to military bases that might better enable us to prosecute the war on terrorism. We have a key interest in seeing the countries of this region successfully transform themselves into the kind of democratic and stable societies that can, in turn, serve as a platform for the spread of Western values further east and south.

—Ronald D. Asmus and Bruce P. Jackson

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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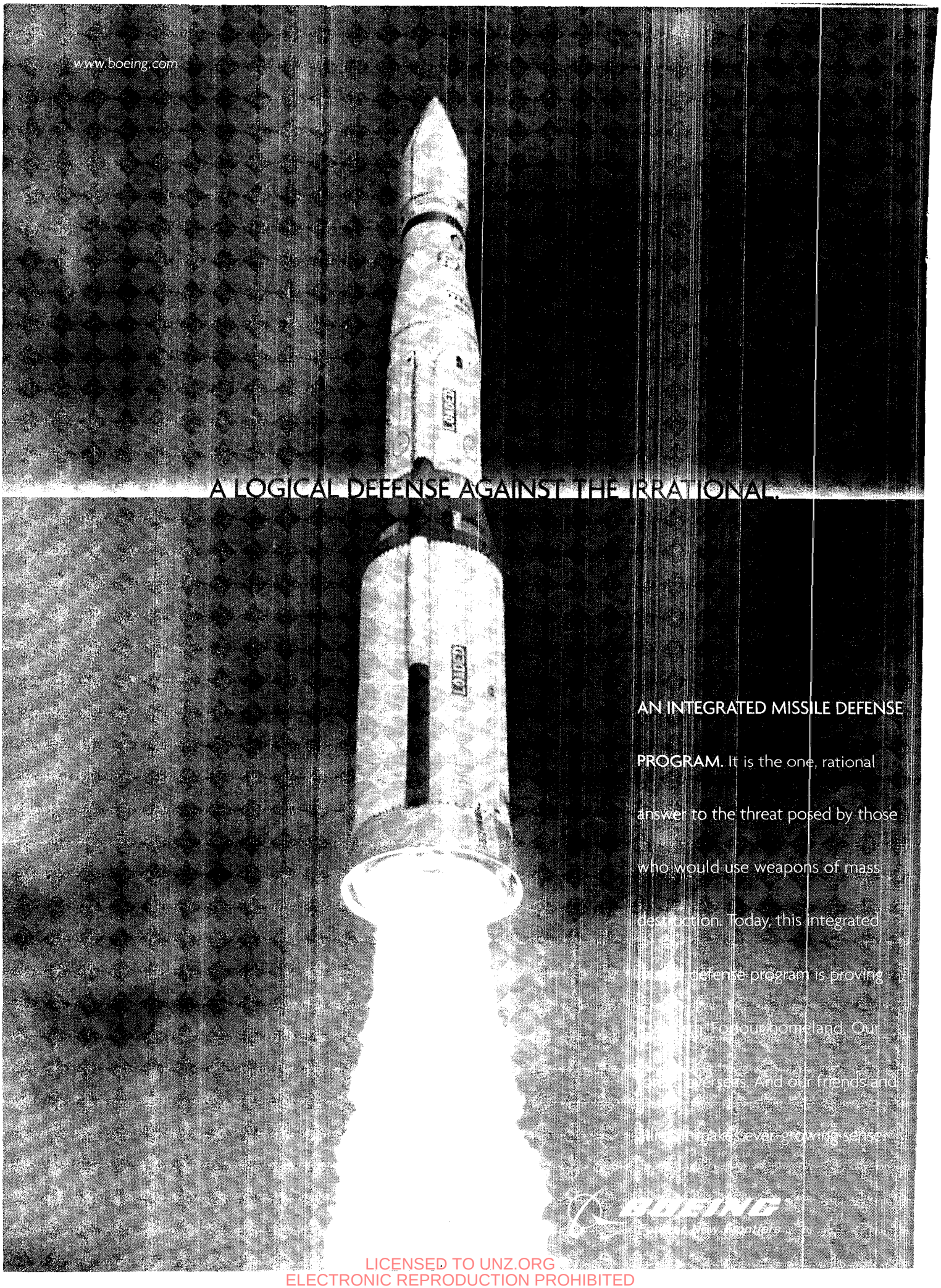

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